

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IDEAS OF TASTE AS REFLECTED CHIEFLY

IN THE POETRY OF THE PERIOD

Thesis for the Degree of Ph.D.

by

P.C.DAS, M.A.



CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	i-xviii
CHAPTER I	
Writers on Aesthetics	1
CHAPTER II	
GRAND TOUR and Graeco-Roman Influence	80
CHAPTER III	
'Picturesque' Poets (I)	103
CHAPTER IV	
'Picturesque' Poets (II)	125
CHAPTER V	
Gothic and Chinese Tastes	155
CHAPTER VI	
Taste for Landscape-Gardening (I)	201
CHAPTER VII	
Taste for Landscape-Gardening (II)	215
CHAPTER VIII	
Minor Poets	245
Conclusion	302
Bibliography	309
Supplementary Pages.	at the end

INTRODUCTION

The eighteenth century is no longer regarded as a mere age of prose ^{and} reason - of commonsense and criticism. With the Romantic Revival of the early nineteenth century the contrast between the prosaic qualities of the Augustan age which lay on the surface became very glaring in the light of the new qualities of wonder, variety and versatility. A change in the popular taste led to a revulsion of feeling against the eighteenth century, which suffered undue depreciation in the succeeding age. The sterling qualities of that age were lost sight of ; it came to be looked upon as an age notable for wit rather than for imagination. The age was erroneously associated with qualities diametrically opposed to the romantic. Classicism and correctness were regarded as its distinguishing features. Towards the close of the nineteenth century when the full force of Romanticism had spent itself, people began to realise the virtues of the so-called prosaic age. The twentieth century is now in a position to revise the opinion of the nineteenth. We are now assessing the eighteenth at its proper value by rediscovering its hidden beauties and neglected glories.

Casting our dispassionate ^{gaze} on the past we find that the Romantic Movement itself was not a sudden efflorescence nor a spontaneous burst of literary splendour. There was a deep undercurrent of romanticism in the eighteenth century to which the early nineteenth

owes a heavy debt. The literary soil of the eighteenth century was eminently fertile and full of boundless possibilities. Just as this age is remarkable in its love of country-life and in its appreciation of the grandeur of rural prospects and of the beauty of garden-scenes, so in the field of letters it produced a rich harvest of nature-poetry, some of it with the freshness of the morning-dew upon it. To go through the pages of some of the eighteenth century nature-poets is to feel the refreshing coolness of the spring-tide breeze in gardens, groves and bowers, shaded from the blazing light of the sun. The noon-tide glare of the romanticism of a Shelley or a Byron is absent. The metaphysics of a Coleridge is not there. The qualities of a Wordsworth or a Keats are present in a subdued form. The Wordsworthian mood of impassioned meditateness is not pronounced. Akenside and Sir William Jones sometimes anticipate Keats in the presentation of a full feast for the senses, but they cannot habitually think in images like an artist. It must however be said to the credit of the poets of this age that ^{though} they could not produce the distilled essence of Beauty in the manner of Keats, most of them, like Dyer, Thomson and their followers were richly endowed with the nature and temperament of the artist. Some of the poets designated as 'minors' were keenly alive to the sense of beauty and were quickly responsive to its appeal. These poets no doubt lacked in the supreme sensitiveness of Keats's imagination, and the body of their works is not lit up throughout with

gleams of exquisite and high-wrought poetry. But they are equally removed from one inevitable danger of Keats's poetry. We are never entangled in the mazes of Beauty. We never miss their meaning in a highly-charged atmosphere of Beauty. If they use lavish ornaments we never lose our way amidst a superabundance of details nor are we clogged by an excess of sweetness. The eighteenth century avoided extremes in all matters. The mental climate of the century was soothing, mild and temperate.

But underneath its smooth and unruffled surface, mighty ideas were working with an unceasing force. A sensitive ear could easily detect the faint murmurs of a distant gale. The destruction of high walls and fences which was the result of a craze for naturalism in gardening was a physical manifestation of the liberation of the human spirit from the dead-weight of custom.
^{destruction}
 The ruthless ^{destruction} of old formal gardens in order to make room for landscape-gardens meant the dying away of the spirit of classical formalism, and in a word, of all cramping restraints of the past. Love of Nature went hand in hand with a passion for paintings, and eighteenth century poetry is specially rich in pictorial qualities. Nature herself came to be looked upon as a painted garden, and the poets of the age prepared a fine bouquet of garden-poetry. Nature and the garden exercised a hold on the Imagination and furnished a mode of escape from the wear and responsibilities of city-life. The healthy contrast of rural life was welcome to the jaded nerves of the city-dweller who was equally charmed by the soothing notes of pastoral poetry.

This contrast between rural and urban life, between pastoral poetry and town-poetry is only one instance out of many contrasts in the various tastes and styles of the eighteenth century. In a period of clubs and coffee-houses, frequented by men of brilliant wit, writing town-poetry and satire, we are carried to cool sequestered retreats along velvet-lawns and trim garden-paths. The descriptive poetry of this age, to a special variety of which Dr. Johnson gave the name of 'local poetry', but which has been more fittingly called 'hill-poetry' by Prof. Elton - is so widely different from the town-poetry of the day, that we are struck by the glaring contrast in their spirit and content. Just as the town-poet Pope found in his country-retreat at Twickenham a refuge and shelter from the nerve-shattering squabbles of the city, so we turn from the stifling atmosphere of the 'poetry of wit' to the 'poetry of imagination', or to the simple garden-poems and 'hill'-poems, breathing the fresh, invigorating air of the country.

English Literature is so prolific of nature-poetry that critics are apt to overlook the garden-poems of this age. In the language of Louis Arnaud Reid -

'Our national character is so suffused with the atmosphere of the fields and trees and clouds and mountains and rivers and meadow-flowers, and gardens and garden-flowers, that we come almost to cease to notice it, to take it for granted.' (1)

(1) L.A.Reid, A Study in Aesthetics (London : 1931),p.384.

Although much of the poetry of the day is mediocre, there are some less-known poems that are unduly neglected, partly because of their stilted style. We have gleaned some of the best descriptive passages depicting rural life and scenery. These poets all loved and enjoyed Beauty. Modern writers on aesthetics might ask whether their love of beauty gave rise to genuine aesthetic experiences, or they had the mere non-aesthetic feeling of pleasure afforded by natural scenes. These aesthet^{icians}~~ists~~ warn us not not to confuse the warmth of the sun, the coolness of shady trees and other physical feelings of pleasure with genuine aesthetic experiences or the pure feeling of Beauty. (1) Judged in the light of modern aesthetics, we must say that these poets had genuine aesthetic experiences, because an intellectual content is always present in, or rather fused with, their preception of the object. Subconsciously they contrast the perfect peacefulness of the scene with the struggle and agitation of their lives and the feverish passions and conflicts of their nature. Emotion and feeling are embodied in the rustic scene which struck a chord in the heart of these poets. They felt the Beauty and Sublimity of the objects of Nature, and their pleasure was eminently aesthetic as opposed to pure sense-perception.

The poets and artists of this age enjoyed two types of panoramic Beauty - Beauty in Sublimity and Beauty in Serenity. The growing taste for mountains and

(1) W.T.Stace, The Meaning of Beauty, (London : 1929).

for mountainous scenery as depicted by Salvator Rosa shows how the men of this age were coming to set a high value on the aesthetic feeling for the Sublime. The poetry of this age is also full of sea-scapes and of 'horror'- scenes of various types. The Sublime as manifested in the beetling crag and the raging sea was only a shade of the Beautiful. Although Burke attempted to draw a line of demarcation between Beauty and Sublimity, Sublimity was regarded as a part of Beauty. The attitude towards the sublimer aspects of Nature underwent a transformation in the course of the first half of the century. This may be illustrated by a comparison between Addison's description of the Alps in Remarks on Several Parts of Italy in the years 1701-1703 and Gray's romantic account of his journey to the Grand Chartreuse in his letter to West (1739). Addison had seen disorder and ugliness : Gray saw grandeur and beauty -

'In our little journey up to the Grand Chartreuse, I do not remember to have gone ten paces without an exclamation, that there was no restraining : Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry.' (1)

The second type of panoramic beauty in which the poets and artists of this age delighted is represented by 'hill'-poetry. In most of the natural descriptions, the poet looks down from the hill-top upon a mild and gently undulated

(1) Thomas Gray, Correspondence, Ed. ^{The} Late Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley, (Oxford : 1935), Vol. I, p. 128.

wooded landscape, with the sun shining brightly over the scene. This beauty is entirely different in character from the rugged grandeur of the crags. Everything is suggestive of peace, calm and serenity.

The taste for natural beauty existed side by side with the taste for beauty in Art. Men of this age drew inspiration from the two sister-springs of Beauty. In Art man creates the Beautiful. Beauty is seen more clearly and brightly in Art than in Nature. Art is not mere imitation of Nature; even a painter who follows natural models is not guided by the sole aim of photographic representation. Art is idealisation of Nature, adding the gleam- 'the light that never was on sea or land.' The world of Art came to be regarded in the eighteenth century as a better world in which men could escape from the drabness and dullness of the present. The two types of panoramic beauty which they worshipped in Nature had their counterpart in painting. Following Miss Manwaring, we have taken Claude Lorrain and Salvator Rosa as two principal types and representatives of the two different kinds of Beauty, in which the men of this age showed a remarkable interest. We have borrowed from her two very happy epithets - 'Claudian' and 'Salvatorial' -the one representing the gay and smiling face of landscape, and the other expressive of the horrid grandeur of the destructive forces and the awe-inspiring aspect of Nature. (1) We have attempted to

E.W.

(1) Miss Manwaring, Italian Landscape in XVIIIth Century England, (The Wellesley Semi-Centennial Series), New York :1925.

realise, as the men of the eighteenth century did realise, the essential oneness of the artistic impulse, and we have tried to show that poetry was one of the many channels along which new currents of thought and feeling flowed in this age. The same awakening of interest ~~of interest~~ in the beauty and sublimity of Nature which is found in Thomson's Winter or in Cowper's Task had already manifested itself at an earlier epoch in the paintings of Claude, Poussin and Salvator Rosa, and it continued to manifest itself in the eighteenth century in the landscapes of Gainsborough and Wilson, and in the garden-designs of William Kent, Capability Brown and Sir William Chambers. These poets, painters and gardeners apprehended the essential identity of aesthetic experiences in natural landscape, painted landscape, landscape-garden and in pictorial description. The aesthetic experience produced by a picture is not of a different kind from that produced by the natural scene or by a descriptive poem. Substantially these aesthetic experiences are the same. The grandeur and sublimity of a raging ^{sea} ~~raging~~ in a picture partake of the same aesthetic character as that of the grandeur and sublimity of a wild sea in Nature. When we are standing at the foot of some vast mountain-precipice - towering and overhanging us - the aesthetic sense of the sublime which it produces does not differ from the feeling evoked by a bold dash of 'savage Rosa's ' pencil. Both impress us with a consciousness of the overpowering forces of Nature. The natural scene and the picture evoke the same

associations and aesthetic feelings. The effect produced by the artist is in no way inferior to that caused by the natural scene - nay, he is sometimes successful in producing happier results. He can enhance the aesthetic effect by proper selection, emphasis and concentration. By painting the inner soul of Nature, the artist is able to convey the essential beauty or the essential sublimity of a natural scene, avoiding or keeping in the background all details of Nature which do not contribute to the aesthetic effect. Nature offered to the poets, painters and gardeners of the eighteenth century a vast field of suggestions for their art.

The artist of this age approached Nature, not exclusively in a receptive mood, eager to receive impressions, but he looked at Nature through an artificial glass of his own. According to Miss Manwaring⁽¹⁾ and Mr. Hussey⁽²⁾, Nature was seen through the inevitable medium of the 'Claude'-glass or the 'Salvator'-glass. But this generalisation is too sweeping. The Claude-glass might have been helpful to dilettantes and connoisseurs whose natural eye was not strong. But men like Dyer, Thomson and Gray, Cowper and Shenstone - were gifted with strong powers of natural observation. This point has been ably brought out by the recent critic, Mr. Deane -

(1) Manwaring, Miss Elizabeth Wheeler, op.cit.

(2) Mr. Christopher Hussey, The Picturesque : Studies in a Point of View, (London & New York : 1927).

'Gray never carried a Claude-glass with him on his travels ; though we might easily infer that Erasmus Darwin used one to help him to put together his scenic constructions.' (1)

In our work we have given a prominent place to the painters who taught the poets to look at Nature in a particular way, and the gardeners to prepare their designs on their models. It cannot be doubted that the appreciation of the English country-side was 'enhanced by the admiration for Claudian distances and Salvatorial glooms'. (2)

Neither Miss Manwaring nor Mr. Hussey, nor their critic Mr. Deane has looked at the question from a broad point of view. They have been too much entangled in the mazes of real or supposed influences. Our standpoint is that the men of the eighteenth century were out in search for Beauty and the poets and artists were governed by the one ruling principle of Beauty. The poets were 'artistic' or 'aesthetic', and the artists were poetical in their tastes. They were devout worshippers of Beauty in Nature and Art. They ^{shared} ~~shared~~ the common taste for apprehending and judging the Beautiful. Beauty was to them synonymous with all aesthetic experiences and included the powerful impression made by a natural scene, a landscape - painting or a landscape-garden. However, we have shown, wherever possible, the Claudian and Salvatorial traits in a poetical description - these may be happy coincidences or deliberate influences.

(1) Mr. C.V.Deane, Aspects of Eighteenth Century Nature-Poetry, (Oxford : 1935), p.82.

(2) Ibid, p.68.

The Gothic and Mediaeval Revival furnished this age with another store-house of Beauty. Critics who identify Romanticism with Mediaevalism will find in the eighteenth century a re-awakening of the mediaeval spirit emanating from the Gothic Revival, with its wealth of novelty, variety and emotional suggestiveness. A Gothic Cathedral expresses aspiration which is one of the prominent traits of romanticism. In the eighteenth century the idea of romantic aspiration co-existed with the conception of classical completeness. Hence the Gothic taste dwelt in harmony with the 'Grecian gusto'. Prof. Oliver Elton cites it as an illustration of the 'divided (1) enthusiasms' of this age. But there was really no clash or conflict or division in their enthusiasms. The seeming conflict will vanish if we realise that their 'divided enthusiasms', their apparently contradictory tastes and styles emanated from a common spring, namely their aspiration for eternal Beauty. As worshippers of Beauty the artists of this age found in the Grecian and Gothic two facets of Beauty which they appropriated for their own use. The classic standard presented to them one aspect of Beauty - perfection of design, form, structure, balance and composition. The Gothic stood for another aspect of the same Universal Beauty - emphasis upon spirit, emotion, inspiration, wonder and suggestiveness. The classic stood for statuesque beauty and the romantic for picturesque beauty. But both kinds of beauty radiated

(1) Prof. Oliver Elton, A Survey of English Literature, 1730-80, (London : 1928).

from the same sparkling jewel. The artists, connoisseurs and poets of this age attempted to perpetuate Beauty in Grecian obelisks and temples, in the Gothic Cathedrals and ruins and in idyllic landscape-gardens.

The men of this age seized on Beauty wherever it manifested itself. This accounts for the predominance of the Chinese taste in the eighteenth century. The Chinese ideal was one of the romantic facets of Beauty. It satisfied the romantic sense of strangeness, grotesqueness and extravagance. Ideas of landscape-gardening borrowed from China and carried to a whimsical extravagance by Sir William Chambers held their sway side by side with the serene models of classical antiquity. By following the beautiful models of Chinese Art this age showed its loyalty to the cult of Beauty.

The eighteenth century is usually designated as the period of 'classicism' with anticipations of romanticism. It is generally regarded as a mere age of preparations. It was something more. It was a period of definite achievements. (1) The new-born spirit of romanticism manifested itself so fully in some spheres of Art, attaining the vigour and splendour of maturity that hardly anything more was left for further perfection. Some of the artists of this age who go by the name of precursors and forerunners of certain tendencies achieved some success in their respective spheres of art. In our zeal for finding mere anticipations in their works, we must

(1) Prof. David Nichol Smith, Oxford Book of XVIIIth Century Verse, Preface, p.ix.

not shut our eyes to the essential beauties and points of excellence. No two words are so often abused as 'romantic' and 'classical' in their application to the tastes and styles of a particular author or of a particular age. Classicism and romanticism as aesthetic experiences occur everywhere ; they defy fixed rules.

'The romantic wild-flower may blossom, with an air of perfect naturalness in the walled garden of a classical period, and the perfect bloom of classicism may be found in the meadow or on the open hill-side.' (1)

The division of poets and literary ages into water-tight compartments is often arbitrary. Even Pope, the high-priest of classicism, shows some genuinely romantic tastes. Critics have laid undue emphasis on the classical spirit in Pope. His earlier verses are written in the lyrical form ; and in his Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady and Eloisa to Abelard there are anticipations of the romantic spirit of Gray, Collins and Goldsmith. (2) According to Prof. J.G. Robertson, it is the French classicism of the eighteenth century which was alien to the soil. The sympathies of the upper classes embraced the French classical taste-

'The neo-classic canons of the French critics, Boileau and Rapin, had to struggle against a body of national literature which did not follow the classical rules.' (3)

(1) L.A.Reid, A Study in Aesthetics, p.368.

(2) Oswald Doughty, Lyric in the Age of Reason, p.64

(3) Prof. J.G.Robertson, Studies in the Genesis of Romantic Theory in the XVIIIth Century, (Cambridge:1923), p.235.

Prof. Robertson thinks that the nation at large remained faithful to its 'unvarnished, anti-classic instincts'. In support of Prof. Robertson, the Spenserian Revival and the renewed interest in the Elizabethans may be cited as examples of the attempts of the eighteenth century to dig into the mines of the past in search of beauty. In our work we have discussed the healthy spirit of classicism. In the language of Prof. Lascelles Abercrombie, 'classicism is the health of art'. (1) A healthy impulse came to eighteenth century literature from the rediscovery of Greece and the excavations on the Italian soil. People had now access to the priceless treasures of classic beauty. The Grecian taste and the Roman spirit which prevailed in this age were represented by the activities of 'Athenian' Stuart and of Dr, Chandler. The beautiful remains of classical antiquity which began to pour into England, and the equally charming descriptions of the beauty-spots of the classic ground of Italy which began to flow from the pen of 'picturesque' tourists, served the purpose of additional incense to be burnt at the altar of Beauty.

Out of the endless variety of tastes and styles of the period under consideration we have marked out and concentrated upon some well-defined tastes. Our main aim in the present work has been to discuss the taste for picturesque beauty, manifested in painting, gardening, architecture and poetry. We have regarded Literature as

(1) Lascelles Abercrombie, Romanticism, p.31.

a limb in the perfect figure of Beauty, and we have tried to show how this part in the body of Art is vitally related to, and draws sustenance from, other parts, giving in its turn its own sap and strength to the other branches of Art. Our treatment by its very nature may appear to be one-sided and we run the risk of presenting a partial picture of the period. It is to be borne in mind that a few selected aspects of its varied literary and artistic life are being considered to the exclusion of others. The tastes for lyricism and for melancholy have been lightly touched upon. The Spenserian and Elizabethan Revivals have not received full treatment.

The First Chapter has been devoted to a discussion of the evolution of the aesthetic values in the eighteenth century. We have selected for our treatment the most prominent writers on aesthetics and taste, art-critics and poets who gave a new impulse to the tastes of the day. In the same chapter we have incorporated the views contained in the essays of the more important periodicals of the eighteenth century. Some of these writings exercised a potent influence in directing the tastes of men to a better channel ; others simply reflected the various phases of contemporary taste.

In the Second Chapter the classical taste has been considered with special reference to the activities of the Dilettanti Society and the accounts of travel left to us by Stuart and Chandler.

In the Third and Fourth Chapters, styled 'Picturesque' Poets the influence of painting has been considered with reference to the descriptive poets. Miss Manwaring's admirable book has been a good beacon- (1) light. But apart from Italian influence, we have discussed the influence of French and Dutch paintings. In the third chapter we have given the salient features of the most important painters who made vital contributions to the idea of the picturesque in the eighteenth century. We had also an eye on the travel-poems down to Wordsworth's Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches(1793).

Our conjoint treatment of Gothic and Chinese tastes in Chapter V requires some explanation. These two tastes were so inextricably blended in the minds of poets and prose-writers of this age that they cannot be separated. Horace Walpole speaks of them in the same breath ; the minor poets and the writers in the magazines join these two tastes together as twin-sisters. The writers of the article on Taste in Johnson's England (Vol. II) have very appropriately taken them up for conjoint discussion. In supplying ideas of novelty, variety and strangeness both tastes were modes of escape from the formalism and monotony of the eighteenth century.

In Chapter VIII on the Minor Poets, we have taken up those poets from the volumes of Dodsley, Chalmers and Anderson that represent the various tastes on which we are concentrating in this work. Most of them may also be

(1) Miss E.W.Manwaring, op.cit.

conveniently grouped under the 'picturesque' poets or 'landscape' poets, but we have kept them in a separate compartment to show how the whole range of minor poetry reflects the varied strands of taste. No special chapter has been written on the Oriental taste. Orientalism in Becketford and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu has been touched upon in connection with the Chinese taste. The Orientalism of Sir William Jones has received full treatment in the chapter on Chinese taste and under the minors.

We have already indicated that the authors of this period were worshippers of Beauty and that they paid their homage to every manifestation of Beauty. In the entire body of their works they have bequeathed to us a noble Temple of Beauty. We have attempted to approach their shrine in a spirit of reverence, admiration and sympathy, fixing our attention on the beauty-spots of their works. We had always in mind Keats's precept that Beauty is Truth and Truth Beauty and this is the only lesson which we need to learn from our study of Literature and Art.

I am deep in debt to the standard works of such eminent scholars as Prof. Saintsbury, Thomas Seccombe, Austin Dobson, Sir Edmund Gosse, Sir Leslie Stephen, Rev. Duncan Tovey, Prof. Courthope, Prof. J.G. Robertson, Paget Toynbee, Prof. Oliver Elton, Prof. D.N. Smith, Mr. Oswald Doughty, Miss Edith Morley and other critics. I have found the chapters in the Cambridge History of English Literature, Emile Legouis and Cazamian's

'History of English Literature ' and the Dictionary of National Biography very useful. I have derived stimulating suggestions from the art-critics - Bernard Bosanquet, Benedetto Croce, Herbert Read, Laurence Binyon, W.T.Stace, George Santayana, R.G.Collingwood, Roger Fry and L.A.Reid.

I would also express my indebtedness to the works of Miss Myra Reynolds, Miss E.W.Manwaring, Miss Amy Reed, Christopher Hussey, ~~and~~ C.V.Deane and to the writers of the articles in Johnson's England. Obligations to other scholars and aestheticians are stated in the footnotes and in the bibliography.

In conclusion, I must express my warm sense of gratitude and indebtedness to my revered chief Dr. George Kitchin, M.A., D.Litt (Edin.), B.Litt. (Oxon) of the Edinburgh University who introduced me to the delights and splendours of the eighteenth century and under whose able guidance I had the privilege of preparing this work. With infinite patience and kindness he has read my manuscript at different stages and has always kept the rich mine of his scholarship open for my use. His valuable suggestions for the study of appropriate paintings, buildings and gardens as a necessary background to my subject were a source of real inspiration and the unfolding of a new world of Beauty to me. I am further indebted to him for the courtesy of lending some rare books to me. I should also express my deep sense of obligation to my friend Mr. Ian A. Gordon, M.A. of the Edinburgh University for his kindness and courtesy in going through my manuscript very carefully and in helping me with valuable hints and suggestions. Whatever blemishes may remain are my own.

CHAPTER I

WRITERS ON AESTHETICS

This chapter has been divided into three sections :-
(1) The Shaftesbury influence, (2) the Art-Critics and
(3) the Periodicals. In the first section those writers
on aesthetics have been discussed who were philosophers
like Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, or literary critics like
Addison, or their poetical descendants like Akenside, John
Gilbert Cooper and Warton . All of them attempted to analyse
Beauty more or less from a purely philosophical or literary
standpoint. But none of them was gifted with the highly
technical knowledge of the artist. A new kind of art-criticis^m
arose with the painters, Jonathan Richardson, William
Hogarth and Sir Joshua Reynolds. These art-critics have
been included in the second section, along with other
general writers on aesthetics, like Burke, Gerard, Lord
Kames and Archibald Alison. In the third section the views
on Taste contained in the major periodicals have been
set forth.

(I) THE SHAFTESBURY INFLUENCE

It was from the first half of the eighteenth century
that the term aesthetic, initiated by Baumgarten (1714-62)
came to mean the philosophy of the Beautiful. His AEsthetica
(1750) distinguished aesthetics from the old philosophic
ideas and marked out a definite object for its researches.
But even before Baumgarten, Shaftesbury's works introduced
a new note of aesthetic taste into England. His Inquiry
Concerning Virtue or Merit had already been published by

Toland in 1699, without the author's knowledge. The rest of his works came out in rapid succession between 1708-10 and were collected in 1711 under the title of Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions and Times, of which a second edition was published in 1714 immediately after his death. Other posthumous works continued to appear up to 1721. Thomson's Winter (1726) bears traces of his influence, and we find a repetition of his ideas and emotions in the poetry of the second quarter of the century in Pope, Akenside, John Gilbert Cooper, Mallet, Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe and a host of minors.

Shaftesbury's Moralists, the original title of which was The Social Enthusiast, reads like a prose-poem in praise of a contemplative life of retirement, in the midst of beautiful natural surroundings, leading directly to ecstatic joy in Nature. Thomson and his followers who wrote rhapsodical passages of natural description were influenced by Shaftesbury's lyrical outbursts. The beginning of Part III of The Moralists contains a rapturous description of the joys of country-life, which is one of the recurring notes in eighteenth century poetry-

'Ye fields and woods, my refuge from the toilsome world of business, receive me in your quiet sanctuaries, and favour my retreat and thoughtful solitude. Ye verdant ~~plans~~ ^{plains}, how gladly I salute ye. Hail, O, Ye blissful mansions, known seats ! delightful prospects ! majestic beauties of the earth, and all ye rural powers and graces !'

Shaftesbury sanctioned the free outpouring of rapturous emotion, even of enthusiasm, provided such enthusiasm was inspired by the beauty of Nature. (1) He distinguishes the modern variety of enthusiasm from the nobler Platonic

(1) Prof. Oliver Elton, 'Reason and Enthusiasm in the XVIIIth Century', Essays and Studies, Oxford, Vol. X.

application of the word, for, says he, 'Inspiration is real feeling of the Divine Presence, and Enthusiasm, a false one.' It is in defence of the real feeling that he breaks out in the Moralists. By 'enthusiasm' he means all kinds of lofty emotion. In an age of reason he rescued the word from its unpleasant associations. That Shaftesbury was an enthusiast is proved by his frequent rhapsodical addresses to Nature-

' Oh glorious Nature ! Wise substitute of Providence Empowered creatress.' ' Oh mighty genius ! soul-animating and inspiring power !'

Such outpouring of feeling became common in the poetry of Thomson and his imitators. Not only Nature's wonders, but the tilling of the soil engages Shaftesbury's attention and he praises agriculture. The eighteenth century produced a large number of garden-poems and poems relating to the soil and its cultivation. Shaftesbury was one of the major influences for the prevalence of garden-poems.

Shaftesbury's passion for Nature was not confined to her tranquil aspects. It embraced 'the rude rocks, the mossy caverns, the irregular grottoes and broken falls of water, with all the horrid graces of wilderness itself.' He apostrophises the crocodile, the desert, Mount Atlas, the thick shade of the African jungle, and other natural objects and scenes which were not usually considered delightful by his contemporaries.

Shaftesbury represented the pure tradition of taste. (The school of taste established by him was partly responsible for the dissatisfaction with regularity and it marks a transition from the spirit of the seventeenth century. Shaftesbury's admiration for the romantic way of looking at

(1) J.E.Spingarn, Critical Essays of the XVIIth Century,
(Oxford : 1908), Vol.I, Introduction.

things was something new to his age-

'All those who are deep in the romantic way, are looked upon as a people either plainly out of their wits, or over-run with melancholy or enthusiasm.'

Shaftesbury was the first important writer to strike a note of buoyant optimism as a revolt against seventeenth century pessimism. His new enthusiasm for nature's wonders animated the descriptive poetry of James Thomson and his followers.

Shaftesbury insists on the education of the art-sense for appreciation of the Beautiful. Beauty is to him what the man of taste or of 'trained perception' finds in Nature or Art. Art draws ideas from sense-perception, and the trained eye and ear are the ultimate judges of Beauty.

For these theories of 'romantic sensationalism' Shaftesbury was indebted to Hobbes and Locke. Hobbes's Letter to Sir William Davenant written in 1650 is cited by critics as the earliest source of the poetry of the romantic revival.(1) This seems to be too far-fetched, but in a philosophical enquiry on the origin of taste we cannot ignore this letter -

'Experience begets memory, memory begets judgment and fancy ; judgment begets the strength and structure ; and fancy begets the ornaments of poetry.'

According to Prof. J.G.Robertson,⁽²⁾ the sensualism of Hobbes was an important factor in the construction of a new aesthetic theory in England. He claimed supremacy of imagination over reason in artistic creation. By admitting the existence of a definite aesthetic sense, he showed

(1) J.E.Spingarn, Op.Cit.

(2) Prof. J.G.Robertson, Studies in the Genesis of Romantic Theory in the XVIIIth Century (Cambridge :1923), p.235.

his anti-classical bias. Prof. Garrod points out that this conception did not exercise any appreciable influence yet it remained a kind of practical gospel of poetry throughout the second half of the seventeenth and the greater part of the eighteenth century. (1) Hobbes's idea might have fallen on the fertile field of Shaftesbury's imagination and borne fruit in Shaftesbury's insistence on the training of sense-perceptions as the first condition for the development of taste. Hobbes's views on aesthetics are also contained in his Leviathan (I, viii) where he says that man's egoism induces him to take pleasure in some aesthetic manifestations. He is pleased by novelty which is one of the sources of pleasure in poetry. Association of ideas lies at the root of literary creation. Hobbes does not establish an indissoluble connection between imagination and creative art ; but he finds out an intermediate link in the pleasure of novelty, through which imagination is related to art.

But a deeper and more important influence was working upon Shaftesbury's mind. This was the influence of his private tutor Locke whose Essay on the Conduct of the Human Understanding was published in 1690. In Shaftesbury's opinion his master's Essay did 'more towards the recalling of philosophy from barbarity into use and practice of the world, and into the company of the better and politer sort.'⁽²⁾ Shaftesbury is here referring to the tone of well-bred conversation in which Locke's philosophy is written. Eschewing the pedantic jargon of the schools, Locke assumed the easy

(1) Prof. H.W.Garrod, 'Poets and Philosophers', The Profession of Poetry and other Lectures (Oxford :1929),p.15

(2) Shaftesbury, Letter to a Student at the University, Letters, I, viii.

air of the gentleman. His philosophy pervaded the eighteenth century 'with an almost scriptural authority'. Locke's influential philosophy was a silent factor in the development of taste. His direct references to poetry are rather disparaging ; but his central doctrine, which derives all our knowledge from the senses, was capable of boundless possibilities for moulding the genius of poets. Shaftesbury grasped the full significance of this doctrine, which he made the groundwork of his aesthetic philosophy. Possessing more lively enthusiasm than his master, he appropriated the idea of sense-impressions for establishing a closer connection between the arts and the inner qualities of the mind. According to Prof. Fowler, Shaftesbury's theory of ethics may be readily transformed into a theory of aesthetics. He establishes complete identity between ~~the arts~~ Beauty and Virtue-

'What is beautiful is harmonious, and proportionable ; what is harmonious and proportionable is true ; and what is at once both beautiful and true is of consequence agreeable and good.' (1)

Refined taste is the foundation of art and morality. He admits that there is an innate sense which makes us decide what is Beautiful, for example, a musical ear in music, or a sense of colour in painting. But the natural eye or ear is not sufficient ; it requires to be supplemented by cultivation. Similarly, the refined taste of the artist is cultivated by practice, making it a safer guide than the natural instinct. In his Letter to a Young Man at the University, written in 1709, Shaftesbury advises him to visit ^{art-}galleries intelligently, with a view to systematic training of taste, especially for

(1) Shaftesbury, Characteristics, ed. by Robertson, Vol. II, pp. 268-269.

one who aspired to be himself a painter-

'If you fix your Eye on that which most strikes and pleases you at the first Sight, you will most certainly never come to have a good eye at allwhen you have got one Glimpse ; improve it ; copy it ; cultivate the idea ; and labour, till you have worked yourself into a right Taste.'

Shaftesbury insisted on the development of a vigorous critical spirit as a means of acquiring taste.

'A legitimate and just taste can neither be begotten, made, conceived or produced without the antecedent labour and the pain of criticism.' (1)

Shaftesbury's school of taste rendered an important service to criticism by connecting Poetry with the creative powers of the mind. The new criticism insisted on taste, sentiment and heart - and thereby linked poetry with the inner activities of the mind necessary for the enjoyment, appreciation and creation of Poetry. Santayana points out that Locke's insistence on the 'mind-stuff' as the only object for contemplation, contained the implication that 'mind is incorrigibly poetical'. (2) Shaftesbury attempted to add something to Locke's sensationalism for pressing it into the service of creative power. But he could not formulate a substantial theory of imagination adequate to the dignity of poetry.

Apart from Locke's influence, Shaftesbury came under the spell of Cowley and Sir William Temple. The influence of Cowley's poetry upon contemporary taste was powerful. Dr. Johnson said that Cowley was 'the first who imparted to English numbers the enthusiasm of the greater ode.' Cowley's poetry and prose Essays (1668) are marked by elegance, refinement and beauty of expression, and reveal a keenly sensitive

(1) Shaftesbury, Miscellaneous Reflections, Robertson's ed., Vol. II, p.257

(2) Santayana, Five Essays, 1933, p.22¹/₂

nature. Cowley must have appealed to the equally sensitive temperament of Shaftesbury. Another kindred spirit was that of Sir William Temple. Both Cowley and Temple wrote like a fine gentleman at his ease. Temple was essentially a dilettante and an exponent of the virtuoso spirit in English criticism. He maintained that though poetry needs the aid of art or study, it cannot be created by art or precepts. He wanted to do away with the arbitrary rules of the French critics. Temple also insisted on the 'mind-stuff' by showing that the true test of poetry lies in its effect on the reader's heart and mind ; it cannot be judged by absolute critical canons. Neither Cowley nor Temple could become conscious aestheticians like Shaftesbury. But it is interesting to note that both were lovers of gardening, which plays a very important part in the history of taste in the eighteenth century. Cowley in his short essay The Garden (1664)⁽³⁾, dedicated to his friend Evelyn, expresses his fondness for gardens. Sir William Temple, whom Prof. W.P.Ker styles as 'the paragon of elegant literature', gives a more elaborate⁽¹⁾ account of his own garden in his essay Of Gardening (1685). But Temple belonged to the old school of formal gardening and several decades lapsed before the ^{advent of the} landscape-school. What is important for us to remember is that Temple inspired Shaftesbury with an enthusiasm for the garden in such passages as -

'Remember ever thy garden and groves within. There build, there erect what statues, what virtues, what ornaments or orders of architecture that ~~you~~^{you} thinkest noblest.' (2)

Images drawn from the garden were very common in Eighteenth
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(1) W.P.Ker, Warton Lecture on Thomas Warton, 1909.

(2) Shaftesbury, The Life, Unpublished Letters and Philosophical Regimen, ed. by Dr. Benjamin Rand, (Harvard Univ.), p.247.

(3) Abraham Cowley, Works. Ed. Grosart, 2 Vols, 1881

century poetry. This was no doubt due to the rage for naturalism in gardening. But aesthetic critics like Shaftesbury and his followers were turning men's minds towards the garden and the grove and the happiness that flows from a contemplative life in retirement.

Saturated with the spirit of the ancient classics Shaftesbury was a purist in architecture and resented the Gothic and Baroque styles. He believed that the highest examples of art belonged to the classical period. The Gothic appeared to him contrary to all sound principles of taste -

'For Harmony is Harmony by Nature, let men judge ever so ridiculously of music. So is symmetry and proportion founded still in nature, let men's fancy prove ever so barbarous, or their fashions ever so Gothic in architecture, sculpture or whatever other designing art.' (1)

The prevailing classical bias of his mind made him distrust every foreign ideal -

'On one side, Gothic architecture, Dutch pictures, Italian farce, Indian music ; on the other side, Attic numbers, Ionic and Corinthian orders, and the Greek models in every kind - Pheidias, Appelles, Homer.' (2)

Addison's distrust of the Gothic was very much like Shaftesbury's. This hatred of the Gothic was due to the narrow canons of criticism which prevailed in Shaftesbury's time and for a century afterwards, until a reaction set in with the Gothic Revival.

Shaftesbury is one of the first aestheticians in whom we discover a modern taste in painting. During his Grand Tour in Italy (1686-89) he had gained knowledge of the polite arts, and during his last years in Naples,

(1) Shaftesbury, Advice to An Author, Part III, Sec. III. He uses the expression 'barbarous or Gothic' in the Advice to an Author, Robertson's ed., Vol. I, p. 179.

(2) Shaftesbury, Life and Letters etc (op. cit.), ed. by Rand, p. 247.

painting was his leading interest. Shaftesbury's numerous observations on Art and Beauty are permeated by the classical spirit. In the Moralist his conception of Beauty is truly poetic. (1) He notices three orders of Beauty in an ascending scale, rising from the simplest objects of Nature, through man's actions, up to the Universe and its Creator. He insists on the classical unity of design in historical painting -

'It should be a single piece, comprehended in one view, and formed according to one single intelligende, meaning or design.' (2)

This theory accords with the views of Claude and Poussin who regarded the complete unity and harmony of the various picturesque elements in Nature as the chief thing desirable in painting. In his Notion of the Historical Draught or Tablature of the Judgment of Hercules, Shaftesbury describes the scene in which Hercules, according to Prodicus, made a choice between the two goddesses Virtue and Vice. This work is of importance in the history of aesthetics. In this work Shaftesbury anticipated the theories contained in Lessing's Laokoon by laying stress on the unities of time and action. According to Professor Howard, not only does Shaftesbury present here the fullest treatment of the 'fruitful moment', before Lessing, but he was the first among all the writers on art to consider 'the pictorial value of the various moments in the course of which an action takes place.' (3)

(1) Shaftesbury, The Moralist, Part III, Sec. III

(2) Shaftesbury, The Notion of the Historical Draught or Tablature of the Judgment of Hercules.

(3) W.G. Howard, Introduction to Laokoon : Lessing, Herder, Goethe : (Selections : New York : 1910), p.lxxvii

Shaftesbury maintained that in historical painting the subsidiary parts of the picture, namely, landscape or architecture, should not divert the eye from the action. The painter should concentrate all his energies on the single instant he chooses to describe. Lessing also insisted that Art should choose the most pregnant moment and hold aloof from incidents of a purely transitory nature. Lessing persistently studied Locke and Shaftesbury. The 'most refined' Shaftesbury was Lessing's ideal of a serious instructor. (1) Leibniz and Diderot were also Shaftesbury's fervent admirers on the continent.

In his art-criticism Shaftesbury sounded a clear note of revolt against the fantastic vagueness and extravagance of seventeenth century Art by insisting that the natural simplicity and grace of Art should be marred by 'nothing of the emblematical or enigmatic kind.' Good taste consists in 'a Hand happily formed on Nature and the Ancients.' Shaftesbury had learnt the value of precision and clarity of thought from his master Locke, but he was hostile to him in his deep reverence for the ancients. Again his classical prepossessions were stamped with an individuality ; he was not a slavish imitator of any one ideal. He would select the best out of everything for the enrichment of life and art. Shaftesbury held that the well-bred man declares on the side of the handsome-

'The taste of beauty and the relish of what is decent, just and amiable perfects the character of the gentleman and the philosopher.' (2)

Shaftesbury's aestheticism was pre-eminently that of the Connoisseur, a new class that was emerging in society with

(1) Sime. Lessing, Vol. I, p.189.

(2) Shaftesbury, Characteristics, Robertson's ed., Vol.II, p.256.

the dawn of the eighteenth century. Shaftesbury as the first and foremost representative of this class enunciated his theory in the following words, which mark the beginning of the new school of Taste -

'I am persuaded that to be a virtuoso (so far as befits a gentleman) is a higher step towards the becoming a man of virtue and good sense than the being what in this age we call a scholar. For even rude Nature itself in its primitive simplicity, is a better guide to judgment than improved sophistry or pedantic learning.' (1)

Among the virtuosi or refined wits of the age, Shaftesbury includes

'the real fine gentlemen or the lovers of art and ingenuity, such as have seen the world, and informed themselves of the manners and customs of the several nations of Europe ; searched into their antiquities and records observed their principal arts, studies and amusements ; their architecture, sculpture, painting, music, and their taste in poetry, learning, language and conversation.' (2)

In his Advice to an Author he says again-

'One who aspires to the character of a man of breeding and politeness is careful to form his judgment of arts and sciences upon right models of perfection. If he travels to Rome, he enquires which are the truest pictures of architecture, the best remains of statues of a Raphael or a Caraccio He takes particular care to turn his eye from everything which is gaudy, luscious and of a false taste.' (3)

The creed contained in all these passages provided an important criterion of aesthetic appreciation in the opening years of the eighteenth century. The spirit of the virtuoso dominated the early founders of the Dilettanti Society, the men of the Grand Tour, patrons of art and literature, like Horace Walpole and Lord Burlington, who, being fed and nourished by the prevailing ideas of Taste, contributed in their turn to its increasing volume and variety. But originally the new stream of Taste had begun to flow from the fountain-head of

(1) Shaftesbury, Advice to an Author, Robertson's ed., Vol. I, pp. 214-215.

(2) Shaftesbury, Miscellaneous Reflections, Robertson's ed., Vol. II, p. 252.

(3) Shaftesbury, Advice to an Author, Robertson's ed., Vol. I, pp. 217-218.

Shaftesbury's philosophy which enlarged the artistic vision of men by opening new avenues of Beauty and showing the relativity of Taste. Shaftesbury's rhapsodical outbursts awakened men to the beauty of the living universe that lies about them. The new current of thought and feeling that took its course from his writings gradually gained in intensity as the century advanced. It flowed ^{through} the field of nature-poetry in the eighteenth century, till it found a full outlet at the Romantic Movement.

The immediate influence of Shaftesbury's aesthetics was felt in Addison's series of eleven essays On the Pleasures of the Imagination which appeared in the Spectator in 1712, only a year after the publication of the Characteristics. These suggestive essays are the foundation of Addison's claim to be considered an aesthetic philosopher, and they are the foundation of the whole romantic aesthetics in England. According to Prof. Robertson, Addison was indebted to Muratori and to Locke. (1) John Dennis is another precursor of Addison. In his Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry (1701) and Grounds of Criticism in Poetry (1704), Dennis showed how Hobbes's sensualistic psychology was the foundation for defining the function of imagination in poetry. In his Epistle Dedicatory prefixed to The Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry Dennis says-

'The end of Poetry is to instruct and reform Passion is the principal thing in Poetry.'

Dennis dwells on the importance of passion in poetry again in Part I, Ch. v :-

(1) Prof. J.G. Robertson, Studies in the Genesis of Romantic Theory in the XVIIIth Century, Cambridge : 1923.

'Poetry then is an imitation of Nature by a pathetic and numerous speech....Passion is still more necessary to it than Harmony. For Harmony only distinguishes its instrument from that of Prose, but Passion distinguishes its very nature and character. For therefore, Poetry is Poetry, because it is more passionate and sensual than prose..... There must be Passion everywhere in Poetry and Painting.'

According to Prof. Robertson, neither Dennis nor Shaftesbury had worked so methodically as Muratori. All these works, however, indicate that there were gropings towards a modern aesthetic theory in England towards the close of the XVIIIth century.

Prof. Robertson has noticed obvious parallelism between the treatment of the imagination in the Spectator and in Muratori's Perfetta Poesia italiana (1706). Addison's familiarity with Italian criticism may be due to his tour in Italy in his early years. The Spectator shows Addison's continued interest in Italy. The introduction of Italian ideas may also be due to the frequent visits of Italian scholars to England at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Locke's influence was as great on Addison as Muratori's. Locke's Essay is the psychological basis of the papers on the Imagination. From Locke's empiricism Addison derived the idea that emotional pleasure primarily arises from sight. The impressions which we receive through the eye heighten and purify our emotions. Addison treated the function and limitation of the sense of sight in the light of Locke's theory. His distinction between primary and secondary pleasures is drawn from Locke's distinction between 'Ideas of primary qualities of bodies and ideas produced by their secondary qualities.' Locke had not used the word Imagination, which is taken by Addison from Muratori. In

indicating the three sources of the Pleasures of the Imagination - Greatness, Novelty and Beauty - Addison was drawing upon Muratori's definition. Muratori was not a discoverer of these qualities, which had long ago been found out by Longinus. But Muratori was the first to arrange them in this way, and he was followed by Addison. Prof. Robertson holds that Muratori - on whom not only Addison but Lessing drew largely - said many things that contributed to the development of the anti-classic movement in the eighteenth century. Muratori and Addison were fellow-workers in the establishment of the new theory of creative imagination.

Addison discusses the various objects of Nature and Art - landscapes, gardens, pictures, statues and architecture - which contribute to our imaginative pleasure. He indicates the functions and limits of the different arts. He defines 'Fine Taste' (in No.409) as 'that faculty of the soul, which discerns the beauties of an author with pleasure, and the imperfections with dislike.' (1) He holds that the criterion of judging a man's taste is to see whether he delights in the classics. Taste is to him an inborn faculty capable of improvement by a study of the works of the 'polite authors', and by holding conversation with men of 'polite genius', and by acquiring a thorough knowledge of the best critical works, both ancient and modern. Addison had caught the tone of the fine gentleman from Locke, and of the virtuoso from Shaftesbury.

(1) Muratori in his Perfection of Italian Poetry, Part II, Ch. x, touches upon 'Good Taste' which appeared to him synonymous with judgment or discretion -
 'It is that virtue of the understanding which teaches us to avoid and pass over all that is inept or prejudicial to the theme we have undertaken and to select all that becomes it. It is the Light that discovers to us, according to the circumstances, those extremes between which Beauty lies.' - E.F. Carritt, Philosophies of Beauty, Oxford : 1931.

The defect in Addison's aesthetic ideas springs from want of coherence and of organic structure. We cannot extract a complete body of aesthetics from the essays of the Spectator. He arrived at different conclusions at different periods of his life. He could not bring them under a regular system. His views are also mostly a reflection of the current ideas of his time. He had not the boldness to strike out a new line of philosophical enquiry. He was too much in love with the ancients to break new ground. But according to Prof. Hugh Walker, although Addison's principles were not altogether new, yet they had never before been so adequately expounded. These principles were much in need of being insisted upon in his day. (1) His essays also display occasional lightning flashes which enlighten some subtle aesthetic problems. The value of Addison's criticism has been estimated at a very high rate by Basil Worsfold, who thinks that Addison was the first genuine literary critic in the opening years of the eighteenth century, and that he exhibited the insufficiency of formal criticism by establishing a new principle of poetic appeal. (2) Addison's theory of creative imagination, though defective in the light of modern aesthetics, was a ^{vital} ~~vital~~ contribution to the aesthetic tendencies of his age.

The philosophers, Berkeley and Hume, were also influenced by current aesthetics, and tried to formulate theories of Beauty. Bishop Berkeley in his New Alciphron (3) (1732) discusses the question whether beautiful objects

(1) Prof. Hugh Walker, The English Essay and Essayists, p. 119

(2) W. Basil Worsfold, The Principles of Criticism,
(London: 1923), pp. 51-52.

(3) George Berkeley, Works, Ed. Fraser, 3 Vols., Oxf: 1871
(and 4 Vol. ed. of 1901).

which are so mixed and various in their nature, are governed by any steady principle of beauty. (1) We catch an accent of Addison when he says that Beauty is what can be perceived only by the eye, and marked by a certain symmetry and proportion pleasing to the eye. Berkeley praises the three graceful orders in Grecian architecture, representing both strength and delicacy. He regarded Gothic art as ridiculous and absurd. He gave a higher place to the art of the Eastern nations over the Gothic. Berkeley held that Hellenic art is plastic ; in giving expression to their idea of beauty, the Greeks did not confine themselves strictly to the same rules and proportions ; whenever necessary, they did not scruple to depart from them, without discarding the original principles of beauty. He believed that granted this latitude, modern architects would fall into caprice. It is the noble simplicity of the ancients which is responsible for the unity, gracefulness or grandeur in their works.

David Hume (1711-76) discussed aesthetics in his Treatise of Human Nature (1738)-

'Beauty is such an order and construction of parts, as, either by the primary constitution of our nature, by custom, or by caprice, is fitted to give a pleasure and satisfaction to the soul. This is the distinguishing character of beauty, and forms all the difference betwixt it and deformity, whose natural tendency is to produce uneasiness. Pleasure and pain, therefore, are not only necessary attendants of beauty and deformity, but constitute their very essence.' (2)

This seems to be a faint anticipation of Burke's treatise.

In 1757, Hume wrote his Essay (xxiii) on The Standard of Taste. He was struck by the great variety of tastes in his day -

(1)
Bishop Berkeley, The New Alciphron or The Minute Philosopher, (1732), iii, 8. (Ed. A.C. Fraser, Vol. II, pp. 132-133 (1901 edn).

(2) David Hume, Green and Grose edn, Vol. II, p.95.
(Ed. in 4 Vols., 1874-75)

'Every voice is united in applauding elegance, propriety, simplicity, spirit in writing ; and in blaming fustian, affectation, coldness and a false brilliancy.'

The variety and caprice of taste seemed to him a matter not of easy solution. The idea of perfect beauty can be derived only from an entire or considerable uniformity of sentiment among men. He finds two insuperable barriers to our attempt to fix a standard of taste. The one is the different humours of particular men ; the other is the particular manners and opinions of an age or country. No reconciliation is possible in the midst of such diversity of judgments.

Hutcheson is the most important philosophical descendant of Shaftesbury. In his Enquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue (1725), Hutcheson appeared in the role of an interpreter of Shaftesbury, giving a more definite shape to the ideas of the latter. In Chapter xiii Hutcheson says that it is the superior power of perception or 'internal sense' which strikes us at first with the idea of beauty. He draws a distinction between Absolute or Original Beauty and Relative or Comparative Beauty. We perceive Absolute Beauty in objects without comparison to any external thing of which that object is supposed an imitation or picture. Under Original Beauty Hutcheson includes Harmony or beauty of sound, because Harmony is not an imitation of anything else. Harmony pleases us without[†] our knowing the cause. Comparative or Relative Beauty is that which we perceive in objects commonly considered as imitations or resemblances of something else. This beauty^u is founded on a unity between the original and the copy. Harmony, beauty or proportion strike the mind quite as agreeably and quite as immediately as the perfume of a rose does.

Dr. Akenside was one of those gifted men who were awakened to a new sense of the enjoyment of Beauty by Addison's papers. His blank-verse poem The Pleasures of the Imagination, the first version of which appeared in 1744, is an aesthetic treatise in verse. Besides the influence of Addison, the philosophical influence of Shaftesbury and of Hutcheson may be traced in Akenside. He drew upon all the vital ideas of his predecessors and aimed at the union of imagination and reason. In one of his odes, he defines his own poetry as

'Reason clad in strains

Of harmony, selected minds to inspire.'

In the Introduction to his Pleasures of the Imagination, Akenside indicates his aim to 'enlarge and harmonise the imagination by depicting the most engaging powers of Nature'. But he could not follow out his theory in practice. He gives us descriptions of the nature of Beauty, Sublimity and Moral Loveliness. He was too much dominated by his moral theories - the Hutcheson 'jargon' of which Gray complained. He is lacking in the fine illumination and enthusiasm of Shaftesbury. He could give a fine poetical dress to the current ideas of Beauty. His poem contains many eloquent passages embodying Shaftesbury's theory - the identification of the True, the Good and the Beautiful, and the belief in an all-pervading harmony revealing itself to cultured Taste. Among the chief sources of imaginative pleasure, it is Sublimity which appealed to him most; he lifted men's gaze from the level of the commonplace, and contributed to some extent to the formation of the new Taste

and
for the Grand, the Sublime in Nature by occasional descriptions of mountains and rugged scenery. Akenside had considerable power for describing landscape. The freshness, originality and supremely imaginative quality of his description appears from the following lines from his Ode on Leaving Holland -

'Far from the pale, discolour'd sea,
That sleeps upon the reedy shore,
When shall I plough thy azure tide ?
When on thy hills the flocks admire
Like mountain snows ; till down their side
I trace the village and the sacred spire,
While bowers and copses green the golden slope divide.' (1)

In his Ode to the Evening Star, Akenside has given us a beautiful description of a woodland night-scene. The stanzas where the poet sings of the nightingale show his accurate power of observation and vivid description, calling up beautiful pictures to the mind. The 9th stanza may be quoted-

'See the green space ; on either hand
Enlarg'd it spreads around :
See, in the midst she takes her stand,
Where one old oak his awful shade
Extends o'er half the level mead
Enclos'd in woods profound.'

Akenside's thoughts are always lofty and his moral philosophy elevating. Some of his ideas are derived from the classical writers, for whom he had the greatest admiration. He treats his theme with a high moral earnestness. With a view to avoid^{-ing} banality he used uncommon words and high-sounding expressions. The extreme redundancy of his diction reminds us of his successor Thomson.

With all the ^{turgidity} of its diction, Akenside's poem contained seeds of nobler birth. The idea of education of Nature which was floating in the air at that time was grasped by the poet -

(1) Poetical Works of Mark Akenside, Aldine ed., with
Life by Rev. Alexander Dyce, 1834 : London: 1845.

'So the glad impulse of congenial powers,
Or of sweet sound, or fair-proportioned form,
The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
Thrills through Imagination's tender frame,
From nerve to nerve

Fancy dreams

Of sacred fountains and Elysian groves,
And vales of bliss ; the intellectual power
Bends from his awful throne a wondering ear,
And smiles ; the passions, gently soothed away,
Sink to divine repose, and love and joy
Alone are waking ; love and joy, serene
Assaurs that fan the summer.'

A passage like this is an anticipation of Wordsworth's Lucy poems . It redeems Akenside's poetry from the blemish of coldness.

We now turn to John Gilbert Cooper (1723-69), a minor poet of the eighteenth century, and a poetical *œ* descendant of Shaftesbury and Akenside. Cooper's poem, The Power of Harmony was published in 1745; that is, one year after the publication of the first version of Akenside's Pleasures of the Imagination . Cooper's poem, divided into two books, is a philosophical illustration of the principles of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson. The second book opens with a description of the enjoyment of rural beauty in solitary retirement. Being a gentleman of easy fortune and lover of retirement, Cooper was following the tradition of Shaftesbury, in insisting upon a cultured life in rural seclusion as the ideal of happiness. Ideal happiness for the eighteenth century consisted not in struggle and adventure, nor in the pleasures of social life, but in enjoying the charms of the country with a contented mind. It is a remarkable fact that the poets of this century praise a country-life with extraordinary unanimity. The eighteenth century appreciation of the country was

undoubtedly different from the later romantic passion for Nature's mystery, wildness, or imaginative appeal. The people of this century loved Nature in a realistic way. Even a town-poet like Pope was fond of retiring into his country-seat at Twickenham. He thoroughly enjoyed the feast of rural beauty, although in the language of Wordsworth's Peter Bell

'A primrose by the river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.'

Cooper was giving expression to the contemporary taste for rural retirement in his invocation to the 'moral Genii' who 'attend the train of rural beauty'-

'bring your gifts,
Your fragrant chaplets, and your purple wealths,
To crown your poet's brow ; come all ye pow'rs,
Who haunt the sylvan shades, where Solitude
Nurses sweet Contemplation ; come ye band
Of Graces, gentle Peace, Contentment Fair,
Sweet Innocence, and snowy-winged Hope,
Who sport with young Simplicity beneath
Her mossy roof.'

(1)

Like his favourite philosophers, Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, Cooper was classical in his tastes, and he sings of the

'enchanted rapture of the groves
Of Academus, and the solemn walks,
As erse frequented by the god-like band
Of Grecian sages ;'

(2)

A 'tasteful mind' enjoys the 'complicate charms glowing through the wide landscape.' Contemplation of beauty and proportion in external objects harmonises the soul to a sympathetic order. The Harmony and Joy

'Of outward things, which through untainted sense
With a fraternal goodness tires the soul.'

(3)

With his observant eye Cooper could take a wide view of

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- (1) John Gilbert Cooper, The Power of Harmony, in Chalmers' English Poets, Vol. XV. (Bk.II, opening lines.)
(2) Ibid, Bk.II, Chalmers, XV, pp. 524-525.
(3) Ibid, Bk. I, (concluding lines).

an extensive prospect. He might have caught some hints from Dyer and Thomson. The following description of a smiling landscape reminds us of the 'gay, open scene' in Dyer's Grongar Hill -

'Ye fields and woods, and silver-winding streams,
Ye lilled valleys, and resounding rocks,
Where faithful Echo dwells ; ye mansions blest
Where Nature reigns throughout the wide expanse,
In majesty serene of opening Heaven.' (1)

In his short poem Call to Aristippus (1758), Addressed to Akenside, Cooper pays compliment to his predecessor's 'faithful pencil'.

In 1754, Cooper appears to more advantage, with his Letters on Taste, a prose-work on aesthetics. This small volume soon became very popular and passed through three or four editions. The book consists of twenty letters addressed to various fictitious characters, Euphemius, Philemon, Eugenio, Aristus and Leonora. Treatment of Taste in a philosophical manner was engaging the attention of literary men and artists. Only four years before Baumgarten had attempted a systematic treatment of aesthetics, and Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty had appeared in 1753. Cooper in following this fashion does not analyse the pleasure derived from objects of taste, but gives free rein to his imagination, taking his reader into a land of beauty. The style of these Letters appeared to Dr. Johnson, 'splendid and spirited.' (2)

Cooper defines good taste as that instantaneous glow of pleasure which thrills through our whole frame and appeals to the heart, even before the intellectual

(1) John Gilbert Cooper, The Power of Harmony, Bk.II

(2) Letters Concerning Taste (author anonymous), London :
Printed for Dodsley : 1755

power, Reason, comes to justify it. Taste precedes the slower faculties of reason and those of imagination.

Cooper's analysis of the aesthetic pleasure derived from rural prospect is interesting -

' A rural prospect upon the very first view yields a grateful emotion in the breast, when in a variety of scenes there arises from the whole one Order, whose whole different parts will be found, by the critical eye of contemplation, to relate mutually to one another, and each examined apart, to be productive of the necessities, the conveniences and the emoluments of life.'

In Letter V, Cooper praises Addison's taste as a happy combination of sense-perceptions, intellectual powers and imagination. The truly delicate and refined taste of Addison 'rendered him capable of distinguishing what were beautiful in the works of others.' But to Cooper's mind Addison appeared to be 'an indifferent critic and a worse poet'. Cooper's eulogies of Akenside, Gray, Collins and Mason (in Letter XV) is appropriate. He points out that the poetry of these men is sufficient refutation of the false remark that eighteenth century had no poets.

The problem of painting and poetry had occupied the thoughts of some of the most active minds of the eighteenth century before Lessing differentiated their respective spheres in his Laocoon (1757). Cooper writing three years before Lessing, compares the two sister-arts but gives a higher place to Poetry. In his opinion, Poetry not only comprehends all the powers of Painting but is superior to the latter. Painting passes gently through the sense of sight only to the imagination : Poetry seizes the Imagination at once. Judged in the

light of Laocoon (Sec. XVI) Cooper's theory may not be tenable, but Cooper was enlarging the bounds of criticism by his repeated emphasis on Imagination. Cooper's appreciation of Collins's Ode to Evening (1746) shows his critical insight. This Ode 'warms the breast with a sympathetic glow of retired thoughtfulness'. (Letter VII).

Cooper, as a true disciple of Shaftesbury, condemned Gothic and foreign tastes, such as the Chinese, the Indian and the African. In Letter IX, he gives expression to the sense of shock which he experienced in the course of a summer's ramble to some of the villas in the neighbourhood of London. Indian screens, monsters of India and Africa decorating doors, windows and chimney-pieces, the 'fat deities of China', - all appeared to him as instances of 'tasteless profusion' and 'unmeaning glitter'. He could not bear the sight of a Gothic building with gilded capitals. Even the Gothic taste was to him an emanation from a 'distempered Fancy'. Cooper's aversion to Gothic and foreign tastes was chiefly due to his love of classical architecture. Nevertheless, with a sure-handed touch, he felt the pulse of public opinion, and his words throw a flood of light on contemporary taste -

'From a cursory view of these motley productions of modern refinement, you would be led to think, that the new gentry of the city, and the leaders of the well-dressed mob about St. James's were seized with a Chinese madness, and imagined a deviation from Truth and Nature, was an infallible criterion of Taste.

Cooper was not alone in carrying on the tradition of Shaftesbury. Even before him Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe in her prose work Friendship in Death : in Twenty Letters from the

Dead to the Living (1728) had given expression to some of the ideas of Shaftesbury's Moralists. This work went through several editions by 1786. Mrs. Rowe was widely read in France and her influence on the German romantic movement was considerable. (1).

The publication of David Mallet's Excursion in the same year shows the influence of Shaftesbury and Thomson. The poem begins with an invocation to Imagination to take the poet to the country where virtue resides. This is followed by a description of the spring, the dawn, the morning and the view from a high hill. The sight of such a view leads the poet's thoughts to the Creator.

Shaftesbury's philosophy was again presented in a poetical form in 1735 by Henry Brooke in his Universal Beauty, a long poem in six books. The first book gives a description of man's mind and faculties, and it ends in a poetical rhapsody in the contemplation of the beauty of the whole creation -

'Nature amply spreads the illustrious scene,
And renders all pretext of error vain.
Unfolded wide her obvious pages lie,
To win attention from the wondering eye;'

Brooke was a friend of Lord Lyttelton and Pope. It is said that the poem was submitted to Pope who gave him some assistance. Pure nature-descriptions are often marred by argument. The poet shows his eagerness to find out the secret source of beauty -

(1) Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe's Miscellaneous Works in Prose and Verse, edited by her brother-in-law, Theophile Rowe, in 1739, had a fifth edition in 1772. Cooper's edition of 1807 with an account of the Life and Writings of the authoress p.236, Letter VII 'Ode on Love' shows Shaftesbury's influence.

'Emergent from the deep view Nature's face,
And o'er the surface deepest wisdom trace;
The verdurous beauties charm our cherished eyes -
But who'll unfold the root from whence they rise?'

Brooke viewed Nature with the eye of a botanist and it is supposed that Erasmus Darwin drew some hints from him for his Botanic Garden. The world of fruit and flower impressed him with a sense of ever-flowing beauty and perpetual evolution -

'Plant within plant, and seed enfolding seed,
For ever - to end never - still proceed;

Again the seed perpetuated grows,
And beauty to perennial ages flows.'

The poet's appreciation of landscape is seen to better advantage in his Comrade : A Fragment. In the following lines he enumerates the places where Beauty is to be found -

'I see it wide beneath the arch of Heaven,
Where the stars peep upon the evening hour,
And the moon rises on the eastern wave,
Housed in a cloud of gold! I see it wide
In earth's autumnal tints of various landscape
When the first ray of morning tips the trees,
And fires the distant rock.'

Joseph Warton's The Enthusiast : or The Love of Nature (1744), a blank-verse poem, shows the mixed influence of Shaftesbury and ^KAdenside, of Dyer and Thomson. The poet expresses his preference for natural scenes, sounds and flowers to all the works of man. The very title of the poem suggests that he was an enthusiast like Shaftesbury. But, imbued with the true classical spirit like his predecessor, Warton gave a practical illustration of the right kind of 'enthusiasm'. By identifying enthusiasm with the love of Nature, Warton went against the rationalistic

Henry Brooke (1706-83), Chalmers, Vol. XVII.

spirit of his age. His championship of the new school of taste is best seen in his famous 'Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope, the first volume of which appeared in 1756. Here he renounced the orthodox poetic standards of the Augustan age and gave a higher place to the poetry of the Imagination. He found the real spirit of poetry in Spenser, Milton and the Elizabethans, and he turned the attention of men to Imagination as the true source of inspiration. In his recognition of 'The Sublime and the Pathetic as the two chief nerves of all genuine Poesy', he was influenced to a certain extent by Burke's treatise on the Sublime which had appeared just a year before. Warton also criticised the didactic taste in poetry in the Introduction to his Odes on Various Subjects (1746). He expresses his anxiety lest the public, accustomed to didactic poetry, would regard his poems as too fanciful and descriptive. The following words indicate the boldness of his innovation -

'The fashion of moralising in verse has been carried too far, and as he looks upon Invention and Imagination to be the chief faculties of a Poet, so he will be happy if the following Odes may be looked upon as an attempt to bring back Poetry into its right channel.'

Joseph Warton's Odes are far above the average ode of his time by reason of their simplicity, love of Nature and romantic melancholy. The images in his Ode to Fancy are drawn direct from Nature. At the bidding of Fancy, the poet conceives, fresh gardens grow up. Fancy exercises her dominion over earth, air and sea,

'While the various landscape lies
Conspicuous to thy piercing eyes!'

In the same ode, we notice the poet's love of mountain scenery, which he depicts in the following lines, describing the different abodes of Fancy -

'Gay on what deep and pathless vale,
Or on what hoary mountain's side,
'Mid falls of water you reside;
'Mid broken rocks a rugged scene

Where Nature seems to sit alone,
Majestic on a craggy throne.'

The vein of language and sentiment in Warton's Ode to Fancy is similar to that of Collins's Odes, but there is a wide difference in accomplishment. Il Penseroso is the classic ^{model} ~~need~~ for those gently melancholy writers of odes who swarmed in the mid-century. Although Warton's Odes fall far below those of Collins, it is extraordinary how they echo and re-echo the language of Gray's and Collins's Odes. We have not placed Joseph Warton in the category of 'Picturesque Poets' discussed later on. But a passage like the above contains the elements of Salvator Rosa's canvas. The influence of Salvator was very great in the eighteenth century towards fashioning a taste for the grand and the sublime. Nor is Warton wanting in occasional passages describing the gentler aspects of Nature after the manner of Claude Lorrain. The influence of Gray and Collins is discernible in Warton's description of the evening, the nightingale and the moonlight in his poem 'Evening'. Joseph Warton was one of those men who, in the latter half of the eighteenth century, were trying to break down the walls of literary conventions and inhale a little fresh air from the open field of Nature. The amount of

success which they achieved in this direction depended upon the nature of their individual genius and the literary atmosphere in which they grew up. Joseph Warton had classical proclivities from the outset of his career and he was a lover of Greek Art. In this respect, his genius was very much like that of Akenside. Both were lovers of beauty and both emphasised the importance of Imagination as the prime factor in creative art. But their expression is often cramped by classical rhetoric and bombast, and the general impression which they leave upon our minds is one of frigidity. Their poetic fire does not burn so bright as in Gray and Collins. Innovation in the field of their creative poetry had to encounter a hide-bound traditional prejudice. In spite of all their failings, we cannot ignore the humble services which they rendered to the formation of a more natural taste. As a critic of the transitional period, Warton's condemnation of Pope and Boileau for their exclusion of the 'sublime and the pathetic', meant a death-blow to the neo-classic ideal. Warton's remarks in his Essay are highly significant in the history of taste, because they point the path of poetry in the direction of the Romantic Revival. The Warton brothers showed markedly un-Augustan traits long before the Romantics blazed the new trail.

Richardson's Essay continued to exercise influence on English taste throughout the whole of the eighteenth century.

- (1) Horace Walpole, Annotations of painting (Strawberry Hill MSS.), Vol. IV, p. 85.
 (2) The Freethinker, 1718, No. 43.

(II) THE ART CRITICS.

About the time of the publication of Shaftesbury's Characteristics, Jonathan Richardson's Essay on the Theory of Painting was published in 1715. He brought out two other works in 1719, namely, An Essay on the Whole Art of Criticism in Relation to Painting, and An Argument on Behalf of the Science of the Connoisseur. These works went through several editions and were very popular in the eighteenth century. In 1792, they were published in one volume as a supplement to Horace Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting (1762-80), with a dedication to Sir Joshua Reynolds.

The Theory of Painting remained for many years a standard work on the subject. Notwithstanding his pompous and exaggerated language, Richardson displays ^{genuine} ~~genuine~~ appreciation of the works of the old masters. Horace Walpole regarded Richardson's reflections on Art as profound and his works as full of 'matter', good sense and instruction, marked by quaintness of expression and laboured novelty'. (1) While pointing out the close analogy between painting and poetry, Richardson was following the current tradition that prevailed before Laocoon. The Freethinker, a contemporary periodical, took up this topic -

'The perfection of a Master-Painter is to be able to perform the same wonders by colours which the Poet commands by language.' (2)

Richardson's Essay continued to exercise influence on English taste throughout the whole of the eighteenth century.

(1) Horace Walpole, Anecdotes of Painting (Strawberry Hill Edn.), Vol. IV, p. 15

(2) The Freethinker, 1718, No. 63.

Hogarth drew inspiration from this treatise, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, as a boy, formed his love of Art on Richardson's work.

Edward Wright, in his Observations, made between 1720-22 and published in 1730, indicates that Shaftesbury's and Richardson's desire 'to persuade our nobility and gentry to become lovers of painting' was well-nigh fulfilled. Taste was not only fashionable, but 'in a way to prevailing'. The collection of paintings became a hobby with the enlightened aristocracy.

The publication of Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty : Written with a View of Fixing the Fluctuating Ideas of Taste in 1753, is very important in the history of Taste. Since Baumgarten's (1) demarcation between aesthetics and philosophy in 1750, Hogarth is the first distinguished British writer on Beauty and Art, and he is the forerunner of Burke, Gerard, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Lord Kames.

Hogarth's Analysis contains many original notions concerning Art, and it was purposely written to establish the principle, that the winding or serpentine line is the foundation of all that is fair and beautiful in the works of art as well as in natural phenomena. He illustrates his theory by ingenious examples drawn from leaves and flowers, buds and blossoms in nature, all of which are formed of winding lines. Among the vast variety of waving

(1) Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's (1714-62) actual contribution to aesthetics was very little. He first used that word to mean the philosophy of beauty - Carritt, The Philosophy of Beauty, p.81.

lines, there is only one which may be truly called 'the line of beauty'. Hogarth made a subtle distinction between this line of beauty and the 'line of grace'. The latter is the one chosen from a large number of serpentine lines. Hogarth perceived the line of grace in the beauty of hills, in the grandeur of mountains, and in things the most minute or the most magnificent. His artistic eye could trace the most beautiful undulating lines in beasts and birds, fishes and insects. Hogarth extended the scope of his theory to the beauty of woman and the grace of man. Nay, he discovered the winding or serpentine line everywhere in Nature - in the beauty of the heavens, in the grace of the earth and in the loveliness of the waters. (1)

Hogarth defends the winding line by appealing to the eminent artists of Greece and Italy -

'There is scarce an Egyptian, Greek or Roman deity, but has a twisted serpent, or some symbol winding in this manner to accompany it.'

The ancient artists were prompted by an instinct of genius to work in the spirit of this natural principle. Avoiding all stiff and rigid lines in their elegant works of art, they imitated the flowing line of beauty which they found in Nature. Hogarth cites Michael Angelo's precept to his pupil to make 'a figure pyramidical or serpent-like'. Herein Hogarth found the secret of that great master's art.

Hogarth associated the theory of the flowing line with the idea of motion which painters call the spirit of a picture. This theory of 'curvature' and 'movement'

(1) Hogarth, Analysis of Beauty, (Folio Edn., printed for the author and sold by him in Leicester-Fields, 1753), Preface, p.xxviii.

as two essential springs of beauty is purely romantic when contrasted with Plato's conception of the most beautiful form as the straight line or the circle. In his general theory Hogarth selects one line of beauty out of many; but he does not lay so much stress upon the element of unity as upon intricacy or continuity in variety. He tried to prove how his theory harmonises with the principle of neo-classic art. He referred to Du Fresnoy's admiration for the serpentine form. But primarily he founded his theory upon universal nature. He learnt this lesson in the great school of Nature and explained it by references to Nature. In the blossoming of flowers, in the flow of the stream, in the gentle swell of hills and valleys, in the rolling waves of the ocean, in the flight of birds and in the sunrise, Hogarth discovered the undulating line of beauty and of grace. He claimed to have discovered one universal principle by which all works of lasting value in Nature or Art could be safely judged.

One result of Hogarth's theory of curvature and movement is his insistence on the importance of light and shade in landscape. The pleasure which we derive from a fine landscape is chiefly due to -

'the dispositions and arrangements of light & shade, which are so ordered by the principles called opposition, breadth and simplicity, as to produce a just and distinct perception of the objects before us.'

Hogarth's reference to a beautiful image from Dryden's Epistle to Sir Godfrey Kneller is very significant -

'Where light to shades descending plays, not strives,
Dies by degrees, and by degrees revives.'

The idea of movement in light and shade was in Hogarth's mind. The movement of form which is one of the chief characteristics in plastic art can be vividly realised in the dance of light and shade. 'Hogarth suggested that Beauty leads the eye through the mazes of an intricate and enjoyable dance'. (1)

The spiral principle of Hogarth with the corollary of motion influenced the landscape-gardeners of the eighteenth century. 'Nature abhors a straight line' - was the motto of Kent, Capability Brown and Sir William Chambers, all of whom were great arbiters of taste. Hogarth had prepared the way for the romantic and picturesque-gardeners of the century. Kent and Brown followed his spiral principle in the undulating sweeps, winding walks and curved plantations. The Hogarthian principle of beauty upon which they worked meant complete divergence from the old ideas of formal gardening. Sir William Chambers was partly influenced by the theory of motion in his attempt to arouse pleasurable ideas and emotions from garden scenes. He was chiefly indebted, however, in this direction, to the Chinese garden.

It is curious to note that Hogarth set his face against the Chinese craze of the time, because the Chinese pagodas are wanting in turns and windings. He regretted that a thirst for variety and novelty was leading people to (paltry imitations of Chinese Buildings'. He strongly attacked the patronage of foreign virtuosi and foreign artists in general, which was the rage of the eighteenth century. (2)

(1) Hubert Waley, Revival of Aesthetics, (London : 1926) p.22.

(2) Baldwin Brown, William Hogarth, p.61.

He never dreamt that his theory would be connected with the Chinese ideal of variety in order to introduce naturalism in gardening. He was sounding the death-knell of formalism in Art in holding that regularity and sameness means want of elegance and true taste. To Hogarth's mind, a man of Taste is he who can conceive constantly flowing lines.

The object of Hogarth's Analysis was to fix the fluctuating principles of taste. He was fighting against sham connoisseurship. He proved that Beauty of form is not a mere affair of arbitrary personal taste, but is capable of sound explanation. Hogarth, however, was not a literary man and he had not the philosophic grasp of mind to deal with the difficult subject of aesthetics. His Analysis is involved and verbose and his style is wanting in method and precision. He speaks of himself as one 'who never took up the pen before'. As he had many enemies, the world of the virtuosi fell upon him for the obscurities of his style and the opinion gained currency that the artist is not capable of writing his own language with lucidity. Mr. Austin Dobson says that it was 'an ill-starred performance'. (1) Hogarth had undoubtedly a brilliant idea in his mind and saw its boundless possibilities, but lacking in philosophic insight and in the gifts of a literary artist, the flight proved beyond his powers. Notwithstanding all its defects, the Analysis was no ordinary book. It was translated into German, Italian and French, and men like Lessing, Goethe, Burke, Sterne and Warburton belonged to the rank of its enthusiastic admirers. The German translation

(1) Austin Dobson, William Hogarth, London : MCMII, p.102

contained a Preface by Lessing who welcomed the book as throwing new light on the whole subject of art. Some of his theories were coloured by ideas from Hogarth and Burke. Modern aesthetic critics, like W. T. Stace, have followed the Hogarthian principle of curvature in their explanation of Beauty - 'The circle and the parabole yield less aesthetic pleasure than a curve which, while pursuing a regular, even and continuous course, yet includes a certain unexpectedness of deviation.' (1)

It is said that Hogarth proposed to draw up a succinct history of the arts in his own time, as a supplement to the Analysis. Some notes for this were printed by John Ireland in his Hogarth Illustrated (Vol.III) in connection with the scattered portions of autobiography, but nothing continuous has survived.

Hogarth's satirical paintings on some very important tastes of the eighteenth century deserve special mention. He satirised the Society of the Dilettanti and 'Athenian' Stuart in his print, The Five Orders of Periwigs. Stuart took this attack with good grace and was pleased with the adverse criticism of a man of genius.

Hogarth also made three satirical designs on what he considered the perverted taste in high life. The first in 1724, called Masquerades and Operas, also styled Taste of the Town, contains the gate of Burlington House. The second in 1731, called The Man of Taste (also called 'Taste a la Mode' or 'Burlington House') contains the best

(1) W. T. Stace, The Meaning of Beauty, p.120

H.B. Wheatley, Hogarth's London, 1909, pp. 82-83.

view of Burlington House. It is a sort of three-sided satire on Lord Burlington, Pope and Kent, three great leaders of taste in the eighteenth century. Hogarth satirised Lord Burlington because he patronised Kent, and Pope because he satirised the Duke of Chandos under the name of Timon, in his Moral Epistle (IV) on the false taste of magnificence. Hogarth's third design, called Taste in High Life, was painted in ridicule of the craze of the day for costumes and the collection of gimcracks of all kinds. Hogarth's genius comprehended the tastes of the time and established an intimate connection between life and art.

Three years after the publication of Hogarth's Analysis, Burke's Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful appeared in 1756, but it contained no allusion to his predecessor's work. In the second edition, published in 1757, Burke mentions Hogarth's work with approval. This edition contained the 'Discourse Concerning Taste.' (1)

Apart from the Hogarthian influence, Burke was inspired to a certain extent by John Gilbert Cooper's Letters on Taste, published only two years before Burke's treatise. This appears from Burke's definition of Taste as 'partly made up of a perception of the primary pleasures

(1) That Burke was engaged in writing this Essay in 1747 is hinted at in a joint letter which Burke and Dennis wrote to Shackleton on 26th May, 1747 - P.I. Samuels, Early Life, Correspondence of and Writings of Edmund Burke, Cambridge : 1923, p.141.

of sense, of the secondary pleasures of the imagination, and of the conclusions of the reasoning faculty'. (1) Cooper had said exactly the same thing in connection with his praise of Addison's taste.

Burke says that taste is common to all men, but knowledge is the result of study; and herein lies the difference between the man of taste and the man in the street. The imaginative faculty is the same in all men, but differs only in degree, through natural sensibility. Sensibility allied to judgment is Taste. Burke holds that wrong taste proceeds from ignorance, and sensibility is a good judge in matters of taste. He discriminates between the Beautiful and the Sublime. Beauty is connected with pleasure : whereas the Sublime is connected with ideas of pain and danger, producing strong emotions. (2) A free treatment of the Sublime is outside the region of the Beautiful. The darkness, magnificence and terror of the Sublime enhance his admiration for Milton's Satan. He anticipated Lessing in his mistrust of the interpretation of poetry in painting, for in painting the Sublime may degenerate into the grotesque.

Addison's essays on Imagination had made it a fashion to investigate into the sources of artistic pleasure. This trend of fashionable opinion went to mould Burke's theory, which was clothed with a peculiar charm for his contemporaries. Modern critics regard Burke's treatise as disappointingly shallow, jejune and

(2) Prof. A. C. Bradley, in his analysis of the Sublime

in Oxford Lectures on Poetry, refutes Burke's general Doctrine of Sublimity as originating in fear - for example, a rainbow or a sunrise is sublime, but not terrible - yet he admits that the essential character of Sublimity appears most prominently when the element of fear is present.

(1) Burke, The Sublime, Introductory Chapter on Taste,
(Henry Morley's Cassels Nat.Lib.pp.29-30)

unequal. We now care little for a theory that associates sense of the beautiful with relaxation, and sense of the sublime with contradiction. But in one respect Burke's work is an important link between Addison and Croce. (1) According to Addison, an aesthetician should not confine himself to objects of art, such as poems, paintings, buildings or statues. He must have the capacity to perceive what feelings and faculties in man these objects of art arouse. The critic should judge art from a psychological standpoint. This is what Burke attempts to do and herein he anticipates Croce. Addison ascribed Sublimity to greatness and found Sublimity only in Nature; Burke ascribes Sublimity to the terrible. Both Addison and Burke adopted the term 'sublime' for popular philosophy to represent the 'Sublime' of Longinus. Addison, Burke and Kant, in their treatment of the Sublime, brought Nature within the scope of their reflection. This, however, was discarded again by Hegel and Croce. According to Croce, a landscape is a state of mind. The imagination is the translation of practical values into theoretic - of states of mind into imagery. A mental image which is not the expression of a state of mind is not an image. (2) Burke's difficulties were that psychology had not sufficiently advanced at that time and he was only nineteen when he wrote this treatise. In spite of all these drawbacks, Burke gives us a suggestive and acute, though not profound, analysis of the origin of our aesthetic ideas. Hogarth had the painter's eye for the external forms of beauty:

(1) Rev. Dr. Robert H. Murray, Edmund Burke: A Biography, (Oxford : 1931), p.49.

(2) Croce, Problemi di Estetica, xii, xiii.

Burke had the philosopher's insight into the complex ideas of the mind. An air of novelty attaches to his speculations which 'exercised considerable influence in modifying the standard of Taste'. (1)

The present tendency among artists and aestheticians is to deny the distinction between beauty and ugliness - a distinction upon which Burke laid so much stress. It is here that Croce differs from Burke. Croce and his followers hold that the word 'ugliness' has no real meaning. Croce says -

'This problem (that of the ugly in Art) is without meaning for us who do not recognise any ugliness save the anti-aesthetic or inexpressive, which can never form part of the aesthetic fact, being, on the contrary, its antithesis.' (2)

Dr. Bernard Bosanquet also maintains that there is no such thing as invincible ugliness. Mrs. Gilbert points out how the conception of the ugly has changed today-

'It is now taken as aesthetic innocence to apply the word 'ugly' to the portraits of wrinkled, old women, cacophony in poetry, discords in music, angularity in drawing or roughness of dramatic utterance.....If you extend the term 'beauty' beyond the merely agreeable so that it will merely include everything that is in any sense aesthetically moving, how much territory do you leave to the ugly? The tendency is to say "Nothing".' (3)

But, in Burke's day, his theories exercised considerable influence on poets like Akenside, who modified his Pleasures of the Imagination out of deference to the imaginative psychology of Burke. In 1744, Akenside, in his First Book, speaks of 'These' 'three illustrious orders... the sublime, the wonderful, the fair.' In 1757, there are only two, because Burke's treatise had appeared in the interval.

(1) Dr. Murray, Op.cit. p.54.

(2) Croce, Aesthetic, p.88

(3) Mrs. Gilbert, Studies in Recent Aesthetic, p.162

Burke's discussion of the aesthetic and emotional qualities of words is very interesting. The value of words is very interesting. The value of words depends less on the images which they evoke than on their properties of sound and association.

Burke devotes a substantial portion of his treatise to darkness, and maintains that the great ought to be dark or gloomy. His admiration for sublimity and darkness did much for the reputation of Salvator Rosa. His theory that 'darkness is more productive of sublime ideas than light' finds its counterpart in the Paintings of Salvator.

Burke's treatise contains the germs of Lessing's Laocoon. (2) Burke felt that the spheres of poetry and painting ought to be distinct and separate. In defining the limits of poetry and rhetoric, he says that their business is 'to affect rather by sympathy than imitation; to display rather the effect of things on the mind of the speaker or of others, than to present a clear idea of the things themselves.' These ideas were afterwards elaborated by Lessing with the deliberate object of banishing pictorial description from poetry.

Burke's accentuation of the broad distinction between the Sublime and the Beautiful led to important results in the world of painting. After the appearance of his work, Claude Lorrain and Salvator Rosa were often presented in contrast, one representing the beautiful and rural, the other the sublime and wild.

(2) Prof. H.J.C. Grierson, 'Edmund Burke' in The Camb. Hist. of English Literature, Vol.XI,p.3.

This contrast had very great influence on the landscape-poetry of the period which will be fully discussed later on.

In the same year as Burke's Sublime, 1756, Alexander Gerard wrote his Essay on Taste for which he gained a prize offered by the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh. It was actually published in 1759. Gerard defines Taste as 'improvement of those principles which are commonly called the powers of Imagination', including the sense of novelty, sublimity, beauty, imitation, harmony, ridicule and virtue. He gives a prominent place to association under the heading of Beauty. His theory that sentiments of taste depend very much upon association, was later on followed by (~~Sir Archibald Alison~~) Archibald Alison.

Gerard was a follower of Longinus and he viewed with alarm the revival of Gothic taste and the importation of Chinese taste. But in Sec.I, on the taste of novelty, he finds an explanation for these tastes - 'When genuine elegance in furniture or architecture has been long the fashion, men sometimes grow weary of it, and imitate the Chinese, or revive the Gothic taste....The pleasure of novelty is, in this case, preferred to that which results from real beauty.' (1) Like Shaftesbury and Addison, Gerard found scant beauty in the Gothic -

'Works in the Gothic taste, crowded with minute ornaments, fall as much short of perfect beauty, by their disproportion, as by their deviation from simplicity.' (2)

In section V, on refinement, Gerard points out that the

(1) Alexander Gerard, Essay on Taste, 3rd. ed. 1780, Sec.I, &
 (2) Ibid, p.34 (Sec.III, on Taste of Beauty). 7.

profusion of ornaments bestowed on the parts in Gothic structures, may please one who has not acquired enlargement of mind sufficient for conceiving at one view their relation to the whole; but no sooner is this acquired, than he perceives superior elegance in the simple symmetry and proportion of Grecian architecture. (1)

Taste is regarded by Gerard as the chief ingredient in the character of the critic. (2) Not only the greatest refinement and justness of taste is necessary, but he should possess that accuracy of discernment which enables one to reflect clearly upon his feelings and explain them to others.

Gerard wrote another treatise called, Essay on Original Genius, and its Various Modes of Exertion in Philosophy and the Fine Arts, particularly in Poetry.

This book was published in 1767. Gerard defines Taste as -

'that internal sense, which, by its own exquisitely nice perception, without the assistance of the reasoning faculty, distinguishes and determines the various qualities of the objects submitted to its cognizance, pronouncing them, by its own arbitrary verdict, to be grand or mean, beautiful or ugly, decent or ridiculous.' (3)

Gerard was trying to dissociate Taste from the intellectual faculty and connect it closely with the internal power of perception. By the time Gerard wrote this treatise, he had come under the spell of the Gothic, probably under the influence of Bishop Hurd's Letters on Chivalry and Romance (1762). The following admiring words in which Gerard now speaks of the Gothic are in striking contrast with what he had said before -

(1) Ibid, pp.111-112.

(2) Ibid, Part III, Sec.iii, p.170.

(3) Alexander Gerard, Essay on Genius, 1767, p.64.

'These Gothic edifices show the inventive power of the human mind in a striking light, and are sufficient to convince us that excellence in architecture was not confined to the Greeks and Romans.' (1)

Gerard believes that it is the instinctive impulse of Genius which designed the stupendous Gothic structures that now appear so magnificent in their ruins. The 'untutored' imagination of the Gothic architects gave to the buildings an awful, irregular grandeur, which elevates the mind. Gerard mentions Joseph Warton's name with deference. He was fascinated by Warton's defence of the romantic and imaginative tendencies of Elizabethan poetry. Gerard praises Spenser's Faery Queen for delighting the imagination with new and marvellous events. Like Hurd, he had the boldness to say that excellence was not confined to the Greeks and the Romans. We catch an echo of Addison and Akenside when Gerard tells us that a harmonious fusion of Imagination and Reason is required in the make-up of a philosophic genius or poetic genius. Being a man of the transitional period he was struggling between two different ideals. He did not want to cut himself off altogether from classical moorings; but he desired to be more free and less hampered by rules. His leanings were more towards the romantics because he regarded Imagination as the first requisite of genius, and the principles of just Taste are implanted in the mind of every man of imaginative genius. Imagination expresses itself in various forms: it 'creates uncommon scenery, it invents new incidents and characters in poetry, and new theories in philosophy.'

(1) Ibid, p.257.

Gerard shows fine critical insight in his appreciation of contemporary poetry. In justice to his age, he mentions the names of Young, Gray, Collins, Akenside and Mason as 'elegant and exalted geniuses in Poetry, distinguished by a considerable degree of originality.' He shows romantic taste by his admiration of Fingal and Temora and speaks of Macpherson as an instance of remarkable inventive genius of his time.

In 1759, that is, three years after Burke's and Gerard's treatises on Taste, appeared Sir Joshua Reynolds's three papers in the Idler (Nos. 76, 79 and 82) on 'Connoisseurship', 'Imitation of Nature' and on 'Beauty'. In these papers, Sir Joshua first showed his ability as an aesthetician, and the ideas contained in them were afterwards expanded in his presidential discourses. He was opposed to Hogarth's 'flowing line, consisting of grace and beauty' and the 'pyramidal principle'. Pleasure in beauty is derived from custom and 'perfect beauty is more often produced by Nature than deformity'. Sir Joshua was a great champion of the 'grand style' which he wanted to dissociate from decoration, and explain it with reference to a normal or central standard of nature, where the Hogarthian curves and windings played no part.

The year 1768 is a memorable date in the history of English Art. On the 14th December of this year the Royal Academy of Arts, having previously received the sanction of George III, held its first general meeting

and elected Sir Joshua Reynolds as the first president. On the 2nd January, 1769, Sir Joshua delivered his inaugural address to the members and students of the Royal Academy. In this, the first of his celebrated Discourses, (1769-1790) he upheld the dignity of his profession and maintained that the study of art was a pursuit worthy to rank with the highest science. He recommends the utmost diligence to the students and 'implicit obedience to the rules of art as established by the practice of the great masters'. They should take these rules as 'perfect and infallible guides, and as subjects for their imitation, not their criticism'. (1) In his VIth Discourse on pictorial imitation, he urged his pupils to imitate the great masters with as great a zest as they would follow Nature herself.

Sir Joshua realised that artists and connoisseurs should be animated by a high seriousness of purpose, if art were to play a valuable ^{part} in the economy of life in the eighteenth century. He disliked the contemporary connoisseurs and travellers of taste who were seized by the malady of vertu. Instead of examining the beauties of famous works of art by looking at them intently, the English virtuosos took merely a superficial interest in them. This sham connoisseurship had aroused the indignation of Hogarth a few years before and he had tried to bind the fluctuating taste by some inflexible standard. Sir Joshua, possessing clearer conception and better gifts of literary expression, than Hogarth, handled his

(1) Sir Joshua Reynolds, Works (Ed. by E. Malone : London; 1801), Vol.I (First Discourse), p.11.

subject with remarkable success. He held that a relish for the beauties of Art is an acquired Taste which is only possible by long cultivation and great labour and attention. A just poetical taste, and the acquisition of a nice, discriminative musical ear, are as much the work of time as a delicate eye for noticing the beauty of colours. These ideas of Sir Joshua on the subject of acquired taste bear a strong resemblance to the notions of Shaftesbury the germs of whose aesthetics have now taken the shape of bud and blossom. But Sir Joshua was far more on the side of classicism and laborious study than Shaftesbury, and he would never rely upon the connoisseur's taste as an infallible guide, unless this taste had been formed on the classical model.

Like other writers on aesthetics, Sir Joshua gave the highest place to Imagination. The object of Art is to ~~make~~ make an impression on the imagination and the feelings. But in the eagerness of his advocacy of Imagination, he called it superior to Nature, and committed himself to some contradictory statements. At one point (1) he said that 'all beauty, grace and grandeur, are to be found not in actual Nature, but in an idea existing in the mind'. Again he contradicts himself by saying that by recurring to Nature, we renew our strength, and the longer we live in the company of Nature, the nearer we approach to the true and perfect idea of art.⁽²⁾ This inconsistency may be reconciled if we understand that Sir Joshua was no blind imitator of Nature. He regarded Nature as a

(1) Sir Joshua Reynolds, 'Discourse', IX, Malone's ed. II, pp. 7-8
and 'Discourse' III, Malone I, pp. 57-58.

(2) 'Discourse' XII, Malone, II p. 108.

vast store-house from which the artist might obtain materials for his picture, which is to be drawn from an imaginative idea existing in the mind. Sir Joshua's own practice of open-air portraiture is an index of the healthy signs of the eighteenth century. In his best-known Discourse, the XIVth, he paid a fine and generous tribute to the memory of Gainsborough, the one man who could have challenged him in his own age, and whose strength lay in strict fidelity to Nature.

Benedetto Croce is a follower of Sir Joshua in attaching greater importance to Art than to Nature -

'The always imperfect adaptability, the fugitive nature, the instability of 'natural beauties' also justify the inferior place accorded to them, compared with beauties produced by Art.... Nature is stupid compared with Art, and she is 'mute' if man does not make her speak.' (1)

Croce's conclusion is not a statement of the whole truth, for 'man' can never 'make her speak' without sympathy and willingness to understand. Love of Nature must exist before we can appreciate her beauty. (2)

As a painter and art-critic, Sir Joshua's own position was very high in that age of elegance, politeness and well-formed taste. His contemporaries regarded him as possessing the soundest and most well-formed taste. He summed up in himself the best aims and ideals of his time. He was the acknowledged head of the English school of painting in the eighteenth century. In 1789, on the retirement of George Romney, he remained in London

(1) Croce, The Essence of Aesthetics, P.47.

(2) Louis Arnaud Reid, A Study in Aesthetics p. 387.

without a rival. Though new painters like Hoppner, Opie, Raeburn had arisen, none could vie with Sir Joshua. Neither Hogarth nor Burke nor any of his predecessors in art-criticism wielded so much power and influence as he did. His canons of art and laws of good taste for correct appraisal of pictures were universally accepted by his contemporaries as oracular utterances. He belonged to the literary coterie of Dr. Johnson, who regarded him as 'the most invulnerable man.' In Reynolds's Discourses, we hear the voice of the eighteenth century speaking on the arts with calm and clear authority. He was not entirely subservient to the rules of his time. He could see beyond the horizon of his own generation. Although most of his views upon art do not accord with modern canons of the picturesque, yet his Discourses written in pure and classic English have not lost their freshness and vitality. His so-called 'grand style' in painting no longer exists. His views on the masterpieces of the early Italian painters, Correggio and the Carracci brothers, whom he regarded with a cold eye, are opposed to the trend of modern art opinion. Notwithstanding all these changes, Sir Joshua's remarks, throwing light as they do on essentials and universals, remain of permanent value.

Sir Joshua could not escape from the generalising habit of the eighteenth century. He repeatedly insisted on the principle of 'generalising' in art. The eighteenth century, as a rule, sought to ~~arrive~~ arrive at its ideal by a cool avoidance of details, instead of

by a passionate instinct or intensity of conception. In the Third Discourse, Sir Joshua points out that the whole beauty and grandeur of art consists in the ability to rise above details of every kind. If an artist seeks to express the essential and profound, he will instinctively eschew what is accidental and superficial. Local colour would detract from the effect Reynolds aimed at. The streaks of the tulip are to be ignored. In the Fourth Discourse, again, he maintains that the works of poets, painters, moralists and historians 'which are built on general Nature, live for ever', whereas those which are concerned with a partial view of Nature or the fluctuations of fashion, are short-lived. He recommends the practice of Claude Lorrain in opposition to that of the Flemish and Dutch schools. He does not like Rubens because his landscapes are confined to the representation of an individual spot. Claude's pictures, on the contrary, are drawn from various beautiful scenes and prospects. But he realised the difficulty of his position on this particular point -

'But whether landscape-painting has a right to aspire so far as to reject what painters call Accidents of Nature, is not easy to determine'. (1)

It is better that Sir Joshua left this point unsettled. With the growing appreciation of Nature in the eighteenth century, more attention was being given by poets and painters to the details of Nature. The classical idea of taking generalised view of Nature was gradually dying away. Milton's Il Penseroso and 'L'Allegro are good

(1) Sir Joshua Reynolds, Works (op.Cit.), Vol.I, 105-6.



examples of the generalised type of seventeenth century nature-poetry. (1) The poet could take a sweeping view of 'russet lawns' and 'fallows grey' which must have satisfied the critical instinct of Reynolds. But he undoubtedly perceived in the poetry of Dyer and Thomson and in the paintings of Gainsborough that remarkable effect may be produced by concentration upon the details of natural phenomena. As a landscapist, Gainsborough had broken away from the classical traditions of Claude. Still, it must be said to Reynolds's credit that, in recommending Claude to the landscape-painters, he was actuated by an unerring instinct. The serene beauty of Claude's landscapes was exercising a wholesome influence upon English taste. Dyer and Thomson had already drawn their ideas of the picturesque from Claude's canvasses. Reynolds also saw how local poetry, describing the beauty of particular spots, was gradually gaining ground. Therefore, he spoke cautiously about the rejection of the 'accidents of Nature'. Besides, his views were coloured by ideas drawn from Du Fresnoy's De Arte Graphica (1668). Since Dryden's first translation, Mason had attempted a second, but it was laid aside for a time, when it was brought into light by the encouragement and illustrative notes of Reynolds. Du Fresnoy's creed was that to paint universals is truly to paint nature, and that the genuine artist should neglect the particulars, and give expression to abstract ideas. Reynolds was simply reproducing the

(1) 'The poetry of the second half of the eighteenth century went Milton-mad under the influence of the minor poems, and in particular of L'Allegro and Il Penseroso. Edward Dowden, 'Milton in the XVIIIth Cent.' Proceedings of the Br. Ac., 1907-8, p.280

views of his predecessor for whom he had profound admiration, although he felt at heart that the current of public taste was flowing in a different direction, producing golden fruits in the field of art and poetry.

It is interesting to note that Sir Joshua Reynolds prepared the design for a window representing 'Charity' for New College, Oxford. This design inspired some typical verses from the pen of Thomas Warton, showing his 'divided enthusiasms' between Greek and Gothic tastes. The 'chaste design' and 'just proportion' of Reynolds's window dispelled the glamour which the Gothic taste had cast upon Warton's imagination for a moment. In the concluding lines of these verses, Warton pays a compliment to Reynolds's art, which could effect a harmonious fusion of the two styles -

'Reynolds, 'tis thine, from the broad windows⁷ height
To add new lustre to religious light:
Not of its pomp to strip this ancient shrine,
But bid that pomp with purer radiance shine:
With arts unknown before, to reconcile
The willing Graces to the Gothic pile.' (1)

These verses are the best reflection of the transitional state of Taste. (2) The Grecian, the Gothic and the Chinese tastes were jostling each other for expression in art and literature. But the credit of reconciling the two tastes belongs more to Warton himself than to Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose sympathies were thrown into the scales on the classic side of the beam.

(1) Thomas Warton, Verses on Sir Joshua Reynolds's Painted Window at New College, Oxford, Gilfillan's edn. of the Poetical Works of J Goldsmith, Collins, & Warton, (Edinburgh: 1854) p.174

(2) Prof. Oliver Elton, Survey of English Literature, 1730-80

Revision.

CHAPTER I.

(To be inserted at the end of p. 53 after Reynolds).

Blake on Reynolds -

William Blake's (1757-1827) marginal Annotations to Sir Joshua Reynolds's Discourses were published in 1798. In his notes to Discourse II Blake points out that Sir Joshua owed his love of Art to Richardson's Treatise on Painting. His notes to Discourse VIII contain references to Burke's Sublime and Locke's Essay and Blake draws our attention to Sir Joshua's indebtedness to these works. Blake penned the marginal notes in the spirit of a partisan, always advocating impulse against authority. In the following passage written on the fly-leaf, Blake explains the reasons of his resentment against authority -

' Having spent the vigour of my youth and genius under the oppression of Sir Joshua the reader must expect to read in all my remarks nothing but indignation and resentment.'

Blake is always eager to point out (e.g. in notes to Dis. II) the contradictions in Reynolds's Discourses - a fault which Blake wrongly attributes to Reynolds's want of genius. Blake maintains that Genius and Inspiration can never be acquired by training to which Reynolds had attached so much importance.

Blake was fond of particularity and he challenges Reynolds's generalising theories. Reynolds said that the genuine

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- (1) The Writings of William Blake , ed. by Geoffrey Keynes (3 Vols London : 1925). The IInd Vol. contains Annotations to Reynolds's Discourses.
The Works of William Blake - Poetic, Symbolic and Critical, ed. by E.J. Ellis and W.B. Yeats (London : 1893 : 3 Vols) Vol. II p.313 et seq. contains Blake's marginal notes to Reynolds's Discourses.

painter, instead of amusing mankind with the 'minute neatness of expression', should endeavour to improve them by the 'grandeur of his ideas'. Blake held on the contrary that

'without minute neatness of execution, the sublime could not exist. The grandeur of ideas is founded on precision of ideas.'
(- Notes on Discourse II.)

In his notes on the same Discourse, Blake criticises Reynolds's theory of 'general nature' and 'general knowledge'. All knowledge appeared to Blake to be particular. Blake was a lover of Poussin because the latter was a particulariser : he did not like Rembrandt for the latter's generalising proclivities (notes to Dis. V). Blake fully endorses Sir Joshua's complimentary remarks on Poussin and gives a long list of Reynolds's references to Poussin.

The perversity of Blake's judgment is most prominent in his condemnation of Salvator Rosa as the 'quack doctor of painting' and as devoid of imagination. His remarks on Titian and the Venetian painters are also marked by prejudice - he characterises these masters as foolish and vulgar. Blake was a man of strong likes and dislikes and he was very often carried off by enthusiasm to make unfair statements. But even these scrappy remarks show his deep penetration into the essential nature of things. In his Discourse, the IIIrd, Reynolds deprecated 'enthusiastic admiration' as a barrier to the progress of knowledge. Blake rightly held on the contrary that 'enthusiastic admiration is the first principle of knowledge and its last.' Blake's profound love of Art is seen in the enthusiastic passage written on the title-page-

'The foundation of Empire is Art and Science. Remove them or degrade them, and the Empire is no more. Empire follows Art and not vice versa as Englishmen suppose.'

Revision.CHAPTER VIII

(To be inserted in the middle of p. 263 after the quotation from Smart's Song to David).

Christopher Smart's Song to David is not included in Anderson's or Chalmers's works of the British Poets. It was originally published in a separate form in 1763 and in a limited issue . In the collection of Smart's works in 1791 the editor did not include this masterpiece. One separate reprint of the song appeared in 1827, and the only one during the nineteenth century before Tutin edited the poem with notes in 1898. (1)

Though primarily ~~it is~~ a devotional poem, it is interspersed throughout with images drawn direct from external nature. Instead of giving us a vague generalised description of Nature, the poet uses concrete images -

'The laurels with the winter strive,
The crocus burnishes alive
Upon the snow-clad earth.' (Stanza 61)

'Rich almonds colour to the prime
For Adoration ; tendrils climb,
And fruit-trees pledge their gems.' (Stanza 53).

The poet gives rich descriptions of the bounty of Nature-

'Trees, plants and flowers- of virtuous root ;
Gem yielding blossom, yielding fruit,
Choice gums and precious balm.' (St. 22)

'With vinous syrup cedars spout ;
From rocks pure honey gushing out' (St.54)

Sir Edmund Gosse in his Gossip in a Library truly held that the poem ' glows with all the flush and bloom of Eden'.

Ripening canes, cocoa's purest milk, vines disposed with oranges - are all adorers of the Divinity. Everywhere there

(1) Christopher Smart, Song to David, ed. with notes by J.R.Tutin (London ; 1898)

are vivid touches of description-

'The wealthy crop of whitening rice
'Mongst thyme woods and groves off spice,
For Adoration grow.' (St. 60)

The poet opens our eyes to the beauty of 'the moon full on the lawn' (l.469), of 'the garden's umbrage mild' (l.466). The poet took a rapturous delight in the beauty of the world, in flowers, birds and beasts. Prof. F.T. Palgrave in his Treasury of Sacred Song noted the transitions in this poem from grandeur to tenderness, and from earth to heaven, as unique in English poetry. Smart describes the soothing beauty as well as the glorious sublimity of Nature -

'Glorious the sun in mid career;
Glorious the assembled fires appear ;
Glorious the comet's train.' (St. 84, ll.499)

Wordsworth and Leigh Hunt were admirers of this poem, and to Rossetti it was 'the only great accomplished poem of the eighteenth century'. Browning in one of his 'Parleyings' spoke of it as

'A song where flute-breath silvers trumpet-clang
And stations you for once on either hand
With Milton and with Keats.'

Browning compares this poem to a chapel of radiant beauty enshrined in a commonplace house. Mr. Edmundon Blunden speaks of 'its daring rapture, glowing picture, rich and rare words'. (1)

Smart's other religious poems also contain pictorial elements. His poetical essays on The Eternity of the Supreme Being and The Immensity of the Supreme Being are full of references to painters and painting. In the last-named poem Smart establishes the supremacy of Nature over Art.

(1) A Song to David and other poems, ed. by Edmundon Blunden
(London : 1924), Introductory remarks.

(e)

'In vain thy pencil, Claude or Poussin,
Or thine, immortal Guido, would essay
Such skill to imitate.'

The same poem contains references to Vitruvius and Palladio, architects whose skill is no match for the wonderful glories of Nature. In his Psalms the poet occasionally flashes before our eyes glittering images and thrills our ears with verbal melody-

'Moon and stars of mystic dance,
Silvering in the blue expanse' (Psalm, xciii).

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE I

(Showing the actual order in the text).

[To be read along with the Revised Chronological Table
Chapter I Table No. II at p. (j)]

Section(I)- The Shaftesbury Influence1711 Shaftesbury's Characteristics

(A) Earlier influences on Shaftesbury :-

1650 Hobbes's Letter to Sir William Davemant1690 Locke's Essay1668 Cowley's Essays1685 Sir William Temple's Essay on Gardening

(B) Addison :-

1712 Addison's Essays on "The Pleasures of the Imagination

Earlier Influences on Addison :-

1701 Dennis's Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry1704 Dennis's Grounds of Criticism in Poetry1706 Muratori's Perfetta Poesia italiana.(C) Philosophical Descendants of Shaftesbury:-1732 Berkeley's Alciphron1738 Hume's Treatise on Human Nature1757 Hume's Essay on the Standard of Taste1725 Hutcheson's Enquiry(D) Poetical Descendants of Shaftesbury :-1744 Akenside's first version of the Pleasures of the Imag.1745 John Gilbert Cooper's Power of Harmony1754 -- -- -- Letters on Taste1728 Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe's Friendship in Death-- Mallet's Excursion1735 Henry Brooke's Universal Beauty1744 Joseph Warton's Enthusiast

Section II - The Art-Critics :-

- 1715 Richardson's Theory of Painting
- 1730 Edward Wright's Observations
- 1753 Hogarth's Analysis
- 1756 Burke's Sublime
- Gerard's Essay on Taste
- 1759 Sir Joshua's papers in the Idler
- 1768 -- -- Discourses (commenced)
- (1798) (Blake on Reynolds - inserted in supplementary pages
- 1762 Lord Kames' Elements
- 1790 Archibald Alison's Essays on the Nature and Prin-
ciples of Taste
- 1794 Sir Uvedale Price's Essays on the Picturesque
- 1785 Thomas Reid's Essays on the Intellectual Powers

Section III - The Periodicals

(h)

Chapter IV

- 1726 Dyer's Grongar Hill
1740 -- Ruins of Rome
1757 -- Fleece
1706 John Philips's Cyder
1726 Thomson's Winter
1748 -- Castle of Indolence
1735-36 -- Liberty
(1766 Lessing's Laokoon)

Thomsonian imitators :-

- 1742-45 Young's Night Thoughts
1737 Shenstone's Miscellaneous Poems.

Travel-poems :-

- 1764 Goldsmith's Traveller
1793 Wordsworth's Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches

Chapter V

(A) Gothic Taste :-

1. Horace Walpole (all works discussed)
2. Gray (-- -- --)
3. Bishop Hurd's Letters on Chivalry and Romance 1762
4. Thomas Warton (all works discussed)
5. Bishop Percy's Reliques. 1765
6. Chatterton (all works discussed)
7. Macpherson's Ossianic Poems. 1762-63
8. Mrs. Radcliffe (all works).

(B) CHINESE Taste:-

- 1772 Sir William Chambers's Dissertation
1773 Mason's Heorical Epistle
1762 Bishop Hurd's Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese

(C) ORIENTAL Taste :-

- 1786 Beckford's Vathek
1716-18 Lady Mary's Turkish Letters
1763 -- -- Constantinople Letters
Sir Williams Jones's writings (of different dates)

Chapter VI

1. William Kent
2. Addison's references to Gardening.
3. Pope's Epistle to Lord Burlington (1731)

Chapter VII

1. Capability Brown
2. Chambers's Dissertation (1772)
3. Mason's English Garden (1772-82)
4. -- Translation of Du Fresnoy's Art of Painting 1783
5. Cowper's Task (1785)
6. Shenstone (all works discussed)
7. Humphrey Repton's Sketches and Hints (1795)

Chapter VIII

- 1776 John Scott's Amwell
(all other poems discussed)
- 1781 W.J. Mickle's Almada Hill (other poems discussed)
Sir William Jones (works of different dates)
Whitehead (-- -- --)
- 1752 Smart's Hop-Garden (and other poems)
-- Song to David (inserted in supplementary page)
- 1745 Francis Fawkes' Bramham Park
- 1767 Jago's Edge-Hill
- 1748 Dodsley's Collected Poems (including Agriculture)
Lord Lyttelton (works of different dates)
- 1764 James Grainger's Sugar-Cane
- 1732 Samuel Boyse's Nature
- 1727 Walter Harte's poems
- 1732 Greens's Grotto
- 1744 Armstrong's Art of Preserving Health
- 1726 William Hamilton of Bangour's Lines to the Countess of Eglinton

Pastoralism :-

- 1700 Pomfret's Choice
- 1708 Ambrose Philips's Pastorals
- 1714 Gay's Shepherd's Week
- 1713 -- Rural Sports
- 1722 Parnell's Poems
-
- 1743 Blair's Grave
- 1735 Somerville's Chase
- 1722 Thomas Tickell's Kensington Gardens
- 1751 Richard Owen Cambridge's Scribleriad

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE II .

(Revised Chronology)

[To be read along with Table No. I. at p. (f)]

Chapter I

Earlier influences on Shaftesbury :-

1650	Hobbes
1668	Cowley
1685	Sir William Temple
1690	Locke
1711	Shaftesbury
1712	Addison

Earlier Influences on Addison :-

1701 , 1704	Dennis
1706	Muratori

N.B.- In the text Shaftesbury has been taken up at the outset with discussion of the earlier influences on him in the following order,-(1) Hobbes and Locke, (2) Cowley and Temple. After Shaftesbury, Addison has been taken up as the next important figure whom followed the Shaftesbury tradition. Taking Addison as the central figure, the earlier influences of Dennis and Muratori on him have been discussed.

Philosophical descendants of Shaftesbury:-

1725	Hutcheson
1732	Berkeley
1738	Hume
1757	Hume

N.B.- In the text Hutcheson has been treated last. Strictly he comes at the top of Shaftesbury's philosophical descendants.

Poetical descendants of Shaftesbury :-

1728	Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe
--	Mallet
1735	Henry Brooke
1744	Joseph Warton
--	Akenside
1745	J.G.Cooper
1754	-----

N.B.- In the text Akenside ^{and Cooper} have been taken up at the outset as the two most important poetical descendants. In strict chronology they come last in the list as indicated here.

Section II - Art-Critics :-

Two transpositions are required in strict chronology :-
(1) Lord Kames' Elements comes after Sir Joshua's papers in the Idler. (2) Thomas Reid comes after Archibald Alison.

Chapter IV

- 1706 John Philips's Cyder may be read at the beginning of the chapter, or he may be read along with the minors in Chapter viii.
- 1737 Shenstone's Miscellaneous Poems should be read before Young's Night Thoughts (1742-45).

Chapter V

Macpherson's Ossianic Poems (1762-63) should be read before Percy's Reliques (1765).

Under 'Chinese Taste' Bishop Hurd's Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese (1762) comes before Sir William Chambers's Dissertation (1772).

Among Orientalists, Lady Mary comes before Beckford.

Chapters VI and VII

Quite in order.

Chapter VIII

- 1700 Pomfret's Choice
1708 Philips's Pastorals
1713 Gay's Rural Sports
1714 Gay's Shepherd's Week
1722 Parnell's Poems
-- Tickell's Kensington Gardens
1726 William Hamilton of Bangour's Lines to the Countess of Eglinton.
1727 Walter Harte's Poems
1732 Samuel Boyse's Nature
--- Green's Grotto
1735 Somerville's Chase
1743 Blair's Grave
1744 Armstrong's Art of Preserving Health
1745 Francis Fawkes 's Bramham Park
1748 Dodsley's Collected Poems (containing Agriculture)
1751 Richard Owen Cambridge's Scribleriad
1752 Christopher Smart's Hop-Garden
1754 Grainger's Sugar-Cane
1767 Jago's Edge-Hill

1776 John Scott's Amwell
 1781 W.J. Mickle's Almada Hill.

Sir William Jones
 William Whitehead
 Lord Lyttelton

No dates of these writers have been given in these Tables. Their poems and prose-works of different dates have been fully considered with special reference to the varied strands of taste. Although strict chronological order has not been followed in ~~the~~ the text in dealing with the minors, attempt has been made to classify them, as far as possible, under representative tastes, and transition from one writer to another has been made with the object of illustrating the contemporary tastes rather than conforming to strict chronology. John Scott, Mickle and Sir William Jones have been taken ^{up} at the beginning of the chapter, because each of them represents quite a large number of tastes on which we are concentrating in this work. The same thing may be said of John Gilbert Cooper who has, however, been more conveniently discussed in the First Chapter as a poetical descendant of Shaftesbury. The list of minors given in Chapter VIII is by no means exhaustive. Some of them have been taken up under the previous chapters as illustrating the general principles of Taste. For example, William Mason's English Garden has served the purpose of illustrating the principles of landscape-gardening in Chapter VII, and the same writer's Heroical Epistle has thrown considerable light on Chinese Taste in Chapter V.

The same struggle between the Greek and the Gothic tastes appears again in The Elements of Criticism proceeding from the pen of Henry Home, Lord Kames, a descendent of Burke in art-criticism. This work, published in 1762, went through seven editions in the eighteenth century and was translated into German at Leipzig in 1763. In Chapter XV, on the standard of taste, Lord Kames refers to the Chinese and Gothic tastes as illustrations of the variable nature of taste in fine arts -

'Nothing is more variable than taste in the fine arts: judging by numbers, the Gothic taste of architecture must be preferred before that of Greece, and the Chinese taste probably before either.' (1)

In Chapter XXIV on 'Gardening and Architecture', Lord Kames holds that simplicity ought to be the ruling principle in gardening and architecture, and in order to attain simplicity, unnecessary details and embellishments should be avoided. He does not dislike the Chinese taste, unless 'Chinese houses, temples, obelisks, cascades and fountains' are crowded into the garden by an artist for supplying the defect of genius. He would do away with the labyrinth and anything that appears whimsical. He is opposed to the serpentine method of Hogarth: straight roads and walks are to him the most agreeable. He wants, however, to retain a vestige of the Hogarthian principle by an oblique approach 'in a waving line' to the dwelling-house. Referring to the Chinese practice of introducing decayed trees, he notes that 'taste has suggested to Kent the same artifice'. Lord Kames here forgets that Kent was more influenced by Salvator Rosa's practice of painting dead trunks of trees on the canvass. (2)

(1) Henry Home, Lord Kames, The Elements of Criticism, (London: 11th edn.; 1839) p.453.

(2) The dead trunk of a tree has been depicted in Salvator Rosa's Woodman and Mercury, the only work from his pencil, in the National Gallery, London; Kent borrowed the idea from him in planting decayed trees in Kensington Gardens.

Lord Kames was a fervent admirer of Kent, because 'it requires more genius to paint in the gardening way'. By the time Kames wrote his book, landscape-gardening had become a craze in England. Like Warton, Lord Kames is a peculiar blend of the classic and the romantic. He emphasised the qualities of regularity, neatness and elegance, fostered by the practices of gardening and architecture. He was also in favour of introducing variety so long as the prevailing tone was not disturbed. He admired Kent because the classical landscapes of Claude and Poussin were Kent's great models, occasionally varied by touches of novelty and grandeur borrowed from Salvator Rosa. The classical unity of theme and singleness of expression was the dominating idea in the mind of Lord Kames, and he loved Kent's garden and Pope's poetry because both approximated to the classical ideal. He never tolerated the grotesqueness and extravagance of Capability Brown and Sir William Chambers who carried the pictorial idea in gardening to an incredible excess.

His views on the Gothic taste are quite unequivocal. He asks the question whether a ruin in the garden should be in the Gothic or Grecian form. He prefers the Gothic because it shows the triumph of time over strength, 'a melancholy but not unpleasant thought'. A Grecian ruin suggested to him, on the contrary, 'the triumph of barbarity over taste', 'a gloomy and discouraging thought'. The Gothic taste had by this time been firmly established in England, and like Walpole and Hurd, Lord Kames had the boldness to speak of the classical taste in terms of disparagement.

Dr. Bernard Bosanquet has found many points of similarity between The Elements and Burke's Essay (1). Both writers maintain that indulgence in emotion of any kind, even if painful, is in itself pleasing. Both suggest the distinction between painting and poetry. Just as Burke had distinguished between Beauty and Sublimity, so Lord Kames contrasts the quality of grace with that of dignity. But what distinguishes Lord Kames from Burke is utilitarianism in art. Lord Kames judged works of art from the standard of utility. He preferred short roads because they shortened the journey. The principle of utility, followed in Gothic buildings, is one of the reasons for his preference for the Gothic taste.

The principle of utility did not, however, make him blind to the beauties of the severer and more massive styles of Grecian architecture. Lord Kames attached great importance to largeness as one of the chief characteristics of greatness in art. He would be impressed by a ruin, only if it were sufficiently large. But mere largeness is not sufficient to impress us with a sense of beauty and grandeur, unless it co-exists with regularity and proportion -

'St. Peter's Church at Rome, the great Pyramid of Egypt, the Alps towering above the clouds, a great arm of the sea, and above all, a clear and serene sky, are grand, because, besides their size, they are beautiful in an eminent degree.' (2)

In the opinion of Lord Kames, the mainspring of beauty and grandeur in all these cases is in organic unity, symmetry and proportion.

(1) Dr. Bosanquet, History of Aesthetic, 2nd edn. 1904, p.205.

(2) Lord Kames, op.cit. Chapter IV, Grandeur and Sublimity, p.90

The greatest service which Lord Kames rendered to the cause of taste was to bring emotion to the forefront as an essential factor in the enjoyment of art. He was working hand in hand with Professor Hugh Blair, (1718-1800), whose discourses delivered to the students of the Edinburgh University from 1762 to 1783 were published under the title Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (1783). Both laid down canons of taste and both insisted on emotion in an age of rationalism. They prepared the way, to a certain extent, for a cordial reception of the principles of the romanticists. (1) Lord Kames took a 'picturesque' view of Shakespeare's language - 'Shakespeare's style is excellent: every article in his descriptions is particular, as in Nature!'. (2)

Archibald Alison in his Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste (1790), makes a happy synthesis of the various principles of taste enunciated by his predecessors. He starts with the theory of association on which he lays the greatest emphasis. Shaftesbury's identification of beauty with virtue may be traced in the resemblance which he discovers between the beauty of Nature and certain dispositions of the mind. (3) He judges the Hogarthian theory of curvature in the light of 'association' and says, the beauty of the serpentine form depends upon association, and when the latter is destroyed, the form no longer remains beautiful. Beautiful forms are mostly imitated from flowers, foliage and shrubs - and Alison is more

(1) Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol. IV, 398-399.

(2) Gray also said the same thing in one of his letters - 'Every word in Shakespeare is a picture.'

(3) E.F. Carritt in his Theory of Beauty (Land; 1914) p.263, holds that Alison's associationism is crude but his criticism of Hogarth's serpentine line was valuable at the time.

(4) Hugh Blair, Ed. Finlayson, 4 Vols., 1815.

impressed by their angles and straight lines than curves. He finds illustrations of this principle from architecture, minerals, furniture and the minor arts and crafts. He, however, admits the general principle of the absolute Beauty of serpentine forms. Although his own conclusions are different from Hogarth's, he praises the latter for having established in his Analysis 'the justest and best founded principle' in the realm of Beauty.'

Alison was influenced by Horace Walpole's views on gardening. Referring to the contemporary taste in gardening, which Horace Walpole called the 'Art of creating Landscape', Alison points out that this taste was founded upon foreign models. The imagery of Italian scenery took strong hold on English imagination.

'The effect of Painting and particularly of landscape-painting, has been very great, both in awakening our taste to natural beauty, and in determining it. The great masters in this Art have been principally Italians.'

(1)

Referring to Claude and Salvator, he says that they followed some one principle as the key to their scenes. Beauty and Sublimity do not depend upon the mere assemblage of picturesque incidents. Some general principle, some decided expression must be present, to which the meaning of the several parts may be referred. Applying the same principle to the sister-art of gardening, Alison says that its great secret consists in the accurate preservation of the character of each scene. The gardener, however, is handicapped by many limitations in this respect. In

[1] Ibid, Vol.II, p.98.

~~St~~ Archibald Alison, Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste, (2nd edn. Edinburgh; 1811), Vol.I

Ibid, p.375.

Ibid, Vol,II,p.96.

gardening the materials of the scene are provided by Nature and the gardener has got to confine himself to those materials which are few and unwieldy. The painter may select from a thousand scenes materials for giving singleness and unity of expression. Besides, the painter has the inestimable advantage of perpetuating on the canvas the momentary effects of light and shade, which ^{can} never be recalled. Alison applies the same principle of unity to Poetry and gives to the poet a still higher place than the painter. 'The painter addresses himself to the eye: the poet speaks to the Imagination'. (1) The whole field of Nature is within the reach of the poet. These views of Alison are reminiscences of Cooper's Letters on Taste. He shows, however, deeper appreciation of the beauty of gardens. He quotes extensively from Whately's Observations on Modern Gardening, a book which he strongly recommends to his readers. No one was so much convinced of the essential unity of the Arts as Alison -

'The effect of the different arts of taste is similar. The landscapes of Claude Lorrain, the music of Handel, the poetry of Milton....become sublime or beautiful to us, when our imaginations are kindled by their power and when we lose ourselves amid the images.' (2)

Alison was following in the footsteps of Burke and Lord Kames when he defined the object of the fine arts as production 'of the emotions of taste'. Those qualities which produce some simple emotion affect us most with the pleasures of taste. He was doing a service to the cause of romanticism

(1) Ibid, Vol.I, p.131.

(2) Archibald Alison, Op.cit., Vol.I, p.6

by establishing an intimate connection between sensibility and taste. He says - 'Whenever the emotions of Sublimity or Beauty are felt, the exercise of Imagination is produced' (II.1). 'It is impossible for us to imagine an Object of Taste that is not an Object of Emotion.' (II. 2).

It seems that Alison was not influenced by Lessing's Laocoon. His fondness for the theory of association led him to support pictorial description in poetry. He wanted to modify Burke's theory of beauty and sublimity in the light of 'association'. He disapproved of Burke's theory which appeared to him an emanation of a rigid system. But rigidity and formality of all kinds Alison wanted to banish from the field of art. He appealed to connoisseurs and men of taste to investigate the truth themselves instead of being guided by definite rules of judgment. It is the picturesque element in Thomson's Seasons which appealed to him most.

Alison chronologically traces the history of taste in the eighteenth century from the Chinese, to the Gothic and then to the Antique or Graeco-Roman taste which prevailed in his time. He admires Chinese taste because it 'brought to mind images of Eastern magnificence and splendour'. This was succeeded by the Gothic taste leading to the 'imitation of forms and ornaments of Gothic Halls and Cathedrals'. He attributes the Graeco-Roman taste of his day to the recent discoveries in Italy. (1)

(1) Alison, Op.cit. Vol.II, p.195.

Alison's theory of association has been developed by aestheticians of the present day. Santayana (1) has dwelt upon the importance of association on our aesthetic experience. Noble associations 'embellish' an object. 'The profit of travel, and the extraordinary charm of all visible relics of antiquity, consists in the acquisition of images in which to focus a mass of discursive knowledge, not otherwise felt together. Such images are concrete symbols of such latent experience, and the deep roots of association give them hold upon our attention'. Mr. W. T. Stace (2) also stresses the importance of associationist aesthetics. Beautiful objects exercise their influence on our minds by means of the laws of association. The degree of the beauty of an object depends partly upon the nature and quality of our intellectual associations. (3)

(1) Santayana, The Sense of Beauty, p.205-213.

(2) W.T. Stace, The Meaning of Beauty, p.132.

(3) The author of 'Beauty and Expression' (Edin. Review, Oct. 1908) cites Alison as the father of expressionism. He ascribes to Payne Knight's Analytical Enquiry the origin of Lipps's distinction between Einfühlung and Association, which Alison had ignored. Croce was at pains to differentiate his expressionism from Einfühlung, which in English may be translated as Introjection or Empathy. Its chief exponent is Lipps. The Doctrine may be summarily stated as: 'Aesthetic pleasure is an enjoyment of our own activity in an object', i.e. we enjoy an object so far as we live in it.

Sir Uvedale Price, one of the chief exponents of the Picturesque School, (1747-1829) in his Essays on the Picturesque, (1794), held that the two qualities of beauty and picturesqueness invariably go together. These two attributes are found blended in Nature. Sir Uvedale was opposed to the theory of those who attempted 'to make objects beautiful by dint of smoothness and flowing lines.' (Ch. V).

The qualities which make objects picturesque are different from those which make them beautiful or sublime. According to Sir Uvedale, the most efficient causes of the picturesque are the qualities of roughness, sudden variation and irregularity. The most beautiful objects become picturesque from the effects of age and decay. (Ch.III) Price loved the 'beauty' of Claude and the 'picturesqueness' of Salvator, and he always mentioned these two painters in order to prove his point - Referring to Salvator, he says -

'There is a sublimity in this scene of rocks and mountains, savage and desolate as they are, that is very striking; and the whole is a perfect contrast to Claude; and it is really curious to look from one to the other.'

Price's view is opposed to the qualities of smoothness and gradual variation attributed by Burke to beauty. Price is answering Payne Knight, who denied the distinction. (1)

Payne Knight had suggested an equally plausible distinction between the beautiful and the grotesque. Such fine distinctions were very popular in England at that time.

Mr. Christopher Hussey has given a good summary of these discriminations.

(1) Principles of Taste, 1805(I.v. para. 19; and II,ii,para. 15-27 and 79).

Thomas Reid (1710-96), in his Essays on the Intellectual Powers (1785), devoted Essay VIII to Taste, Novelty, Grandeur and Beauty. He contends for the independent existence of beauty, but admits that we do not know what it is that we call beautiful and that we only know its effect upon us. A work of art may appear beautiful to the child and the ignorant. It pleases him, but he knows not why. To a man of taste, however, beauty does not appear mysterious; 'internal taste' enables him to comprehend Beauty perfectly. Some objects strike us at once and appear beautiful at first sight. Reid calls the beauty of such objects 'an occult quality.' Novelty has no independent existence; Grandeur is that degree of excellence which merits admiration. Reid asks, Is there no real grandeur in material objects? Although he finds it difficult to deny its existence altogether, he holds that the grandeur of external objects is also really derived from something intellectual within us -

'Grandeur is found, originally and properly, in qualities of mind; it is discerned in objects of sense, only by reflection, as the light we perceive in moon and planets is truly the light of the sun; and those who look for grandeur in mere matter, seek the living among the dead.'

Reid denied that Ideas or Images of things in the mind are the only objects of thought. Even what we call the sense of taste (or of relish) is something more than a mental event. The same thing is true of taste in a metaphorical sense -

'When a man pronounces a poem or a palace to be beautiful, he affirms something of that poem or that palace; and every affirmation or denial expresses judgment.' (1)

(1) Hamilton's Reid, p.492.

This quality of beauty in the thing is also sometimes occult to us. When the judgment is enlightened, we apprehend some real excellence in the thing, and this is the quality of its beauty. Therefore, there are as many species of beauty as there are discernible species of real excellence. Reid supports this conclusion by analysing the objects of aesthetic Taste. If freshness and novelty contain appeal to us, then this novelty is a temporal relation between mind and thing; it is no mental sensation. Like, Burke, he held that Sublimity is not ~~only~~ a product of dread. It is grave and solemn because the emotions appropriate to it are determined by a certain exalted excellence or perfection.

'Beauty is not irrational; for the emotions pertaining to it are appropriate to real excellence and depends upon some perfection in beautiful things.'

Taste in every department of life and society -

Taste is at present the darling idol of the white world, and the world of letters; and seems to be venerated as the quintessence of almost all the arts and sciences. The fine ladies and gentlemen dress with taste; the architects, whether Gothic and Chinese, build with taste; the painters paint with taste; the poets write with taste; critics read with taste; and, in short, fiddlers, players, singers, dancers and mechanics themselves are all the sons and daughters of Taste.

The writer points out that the ornaments, both on the outside and inside of houses, are all Gothic or Chinese.

...the taste of taste, warmed by surprise and novelty and giving a 'lance to the imagination' were the 'chief regulators of fashion.' In his three-fold division of Taste, the Gothic and Chinese tastes taken together, come under the first

(III) THE PERIODICALS.

The discussion on Taste was a favourite subject with the eighteenth century essayists. Besides Addison's eleven papers on the Pleasures of the Imagination in the Spectator, the periodicals of the eighteenth century contain some noteworthy essays on Taste and Aesthetics.

We may begin with Lord Chesterfield's essay on Taste in the Commonsense (11th February, 1738) where he refers to the contemporary craze for the word 'Taste' -

'Taste is now the fashionable word of the fashionable world, everything must be done with 'taste' - that is settled; but where, and what that taste is, is not quite so certain. They build houses in taste, which they cannot live in with conveniency.'

In 1756, the subject of Taste was taken up by the Connoisseur (No.120) where the essayist shows the pervasive influence of Taste in every department of life and society -

'Taste is at present the darling idol of the polite world, and the world of letters; and seems to be considered as the quintessence of almost all the arts and sciences. The fine ladies and gentlemen dress with taste; the architects, whether Gothic and Chinese, build with taste; the painters paint with taste; the poets write with taste; critics read with taste; and, in short, fiddlers, players, singers, dancers and mechanics themselves are all the sons and daughters of Taste.'

The writer points out that the ornaments, both on the outside and inside of houses, are all Gothic or Chinese.

These two kinds of taste, marked by caprice and novelty and giving a 'loose to the imagination' were the 'chief regulators of fashion.' In his three-fold division of Taste, the Gothic and Chinese tastes taken together, come under the first

species of taste. The classical taste comes under the second species and is represented by those who 'despising the modern whims to which fashion has given the name of Taste', follow the chaste model of the ancients. These ~~man~~^{men} are the poets and critics who conform to the rules of Quintilian, Horace and Aristotle. The works of these classicists are 'intended merely for the perusal of persons of the most refined Taste'. Under the third category of taste come the connoisseurs in Architecture who 'build ruins after Vêtruvius, and necessities according to Palladio'. The country was then passing through the phase of Palladianism, and the essayist is correct when he says that architecture is the main article, in which the efforts of contemporary taste were being displayed.

The Connoisseur (1754-56), started a little later (1) and closed a little earlier than The World, was conducted by two principal authors, George Colman and Bonnett Thornton who usually wrote their essays jointly. In Connoisseur No. 113, there is a discussion on the taste for adorning gardens with the statues of pagan deities -

'Taste has peopled the walks and gardens of the great with more numerous inhabitants than the ancient Satyrs, Fauns and Dryads.....Taste has introduced the Heathen mythology into our gardens. If a pond is dug, Neptune, at the command of Taste, emerges from the basin, and presides in the middle; or if a viasta is cut through a grove, it must be terminated by a Flora, or an Apollo.'

Pope and most of the minor poets of the century believed in 'the genius of the place'. The gardeners of this age were dominated by the same idea -

(1) The Connoisseur, by George Colman and Bonnett Thornton, Jan. 1754-Sept. 1756.

'As the ancients held that every spot of ground had its guardian genius, and that woodland deities were pegged in the knotty entrails of every tree, so in the gardens laid out in modern taste, every walk is peopled with gods and goddesses, and every corner of it has its tutelary deity.'

The essayist characterises this classical taste as sheer idolatry, of which the citizens, noblemen, esquires and divines are guilty in every part of England. The craze for heathen gods is seen not only in the gardens and groves, but also in the interior of houses which were stuffed with 'monstrous images'. The passion for Chinese art did not go unnoticed -

'They would sooner give up a favourite lap-dog than a grotesque chimney-piece figure of a Chinese saint with numberless heads and arms.'

The writer makes a humorous proposal for the imposition of a tax upon the heathen deities which will stem the tide of this taste.

In No. 73, of the Connoisseur, the writer deplores that classical and heathen tastes have invaded the Westminster Abbey. If Socrates were to revive, he would mistake the Abbey for a Pantheon. 'The modern taste has ransacked all the fabulous accounts of the Heathen Mythology to strike out new embellishments for our Christian monuments.' The essayist is so much alarmed that he suggests to stop this kind of taste, otherwise the Churches, instead of being dedicated to the service of religion, 'will be set apart for the reception of the Heathen gods'.

The mixture of pagan and Christian belief, as represented on the tombs 'set up in compliance to modern taste' is shocking to the writer.

In the same essay the writer condemns the Chinese taste in gardens as an illustration how 'modern taste is continually striking out new improvements'. He entertains an apprehension lest Chinese taste invades the Churches, and his following lines are very significant -

'It is not to be doubted, but that the Chinese taste which has already taken possession of our gardens, our buildings, and our furniture, will also soon find its way into our churches.'

In the last essay of the Connoisseur (No.139), the editor, while bidding farewell to his readers, grumbles that his 'complaints against the modern innovations of taste have been disregarded'. Notwithstanding all his admonitions, 'the villas of our citizens are fantastically adorned with Chinese palings, and our streets encumbered with superb colonnades, porticos, Gothic arches, and Venitian windows.'

In No. 125 of the Connoisseur which is in the form of a letter written by a gentleman from Cambridge, the writer deplores the barrenness of invention in contemporary poetry. He attributes this to an excess of the critical spirit, helped by the writings of Addison and Pope. Having acquired an early knowledge of what chaste writing is, people try to suppress their genius and imagination. In trying to avoid incorrectness, people have become 'ridiculously precise and affected', in fact, dominated by 'too correct taste.'

No. 72 of the Connoisseur is devoted to a discussion of ballad poetry. The writer says that the ballad is peculiarly adapted to the genius of the English people, and that it was reserved for the poets of the eighteenth century to bring this kind of poetry to perfection.

In No. 71 of the Connoisseur, the writer confesses how he was affected by the contemporary taste for gardening -

'I have considered my papers as so many flowers, which joined together would make up a pretty nosegay'. This metaphor is very appropriate because the Connoisseur contains the greatest number of papers bearing on pure taste; and the editor of this periodical identifies taste mostly with gardening -

'The full display of modern polite learning is exhibited in the decorations of parks, gardens, etc., and centred in taste. Taste comprehends the whole idea of the polite arts, and sheds its influence on every lawn, avenue, grass-plot and parterre.'

In 1759, Goldsmith contributed to the Bee (1) a set of essays on the cultivation of Taste, the Origin of Poetry, on Metaphor and on Versification. Goldsmith, however, could not handle this elusive subject in the spirit of the true literary critic. Goldsmith's Chinese Letters which were afterwards published under the general title of the Citizen of the World have been discussed in connection with Chinese taste.

A survey of the field of periodical essays in the eighteenth century conveys the lasting impression of the influence of the Spectator and the Tatler. (2)

(1) Goldsmith in the Bee, 6th Oct. - 24th Nov. 1759.
 (2) The Spectator (1711-1712) 1st Mar. 1711 - 6th Dec. 1712
 The Tatler, April, 1709 - Jan. 1711.

Apart from his views on aesthetics, Addison expresses his admiration for paintings in some of the essays of the Spectator. In No. 83, we are told that he withdrew himself into the visionary world of art to meet with 'shining landscapes'. As a connoisseur, he appreciated the exactitude of Dutch Art. He was also impressed by the paintings of Raphael, Titian, Guido Reni, Carracci, Correggio and Rubens. In No. 229, Addison dwells upon Michael Angelo's source of inspiration - how he derived his whole art from a mutilated statue found in Rome.

Nos. 226, 244 and 555 of the Spectator contain Steele's views on Painting. In No. 226, Steele suggests that the Art of Painting should be made use of for the improvement of manners. Steele regarded picture as a poem, easily understandable. In No. 244, he tells us that, in order to improve the pleasures of sight, one must study and observe excellent drawings and pictures. The beauty of paintings does not consist in the show and glare of colours; the best painter is one who is the best imitator of Nature. In No. 555, Painting has been regarded as an art of a vast extent. One man cannot master its different branches, such as history, battles, landscapes, sea-pieces, fruits and flowers. A landscape-painter may not be good in portrait-painting. Again, each nation excels in some kind of painting -

'Italy..... for history-painting; Holland for drolls, and a neat finished manner of working; France for gay, fluttering pictures; and England for portraits.'

Addison tried to create an interest in sea-scapes in No. 489 of the Spectator. Of all objects, the sea affects the imagination most by reason of its greatness, which is one of the chief sources of the pleasures of the imagination. The sea in a tempest looks like a floating mountain producing agreeable horror. Therefore, great painters do not confine themselves to landscapes of gardens, groves and meadows, but 'very often employ their pencils upon sea-pieces.' Addison's essay reminds us of the wonderful sea-scapes in the poetry of Falconer and Byron.

Addison took a genuine delight in the objects of Nature. In No. 393 of the Spectator, he expresses his joy in the shade of groves and woods and in the embroidery of fields and meadows. In No. 565, he gives a picturesque description of sunset, noting the richness and variety of colours in the Western horizon. Addison's keen sense of colour is seen from the following passage -

'I at first amused myself with all the richness and variety of colours which appeared in the western part of heaven; in proportion as they faded away and went out, several stars and planets appeared one after another, until the whole firmament was in a glow. The blueness of the ether was exceedingly heightened and enlivened by the season of the year, and by rays of all those luminaries that passed through it. The galaxy appeared in its most beautiful white. To complete the scene, the full moon rose at length in that clouded majesty which Milton takes notice of, and opened to the eye a new picture of Nature.'

Colour-sensations yielded an intense pleasure to Addison.

In the light of modern aesthetics, it may be doubted whether this pleasure was aesthetic in character. Some independent intellectual concept must be fused with the scene in order to give rise to aesthetic pleasure. Addison says that he simply amused himself: he never gave expression to feeling

or emotion, nor drew any contrast with the stress and strain of life. He has taken here a panoramic view of Nature and has pictured a whole coloured landscape. No one can stand in the midst of such a scene without feeling a thrill of joy. Addison, with his fine aesthetic perceptions, felt the beauty of the spot, but he avoided gushing rapture in translating his experience into words.

The Spectator and the Tatler are thick-sown with passages showing spontaneous delight in open-air country-life and rural sports. The note of contemplative life in retirement which was struck by Shaftesbury, and which is one of the most prominent notes in the whole range of the poetry of the eighteenth century, was taken up by the essayists. In No.118 of the Spectator, Steele dwells on the charm of the country and shows how the prospects around him struck him with a new sense of pleasure. In Tatler No. 169, Steele says that a man living a country-life is far more happy than any in the pastoral descriptions of poets or in the solitudes of philosophers. Steele was alive to the beauties of Nature -

'To stand by a stream, naturally lulls the mind into composure and reverence; to walk in shades diversifies that pleasure; and a bright sunshine makes a man consider all Nature in gladness, and himself the happiest being in it.'

From the consideration of a passage like this, we may say with Professor Hugh Walker that Steele 'reached on towards the romanticists of the future'. (1)

(1) The English Essay and Essayists, (London: 1915), p.112.

Tatler No.89 shows that side by side with the attraction of town-life with its clubs and coffee-houses, there existed a healthy taste for the country -

'Bred as we have been to the knowledge of books as well as men, a letter dated from a garden, a grotto, a fountain, a wood, a meadow, or the banks of a river, may be more entertaining than one from Tom's, Will's, etc.'

No. 120 of the Tatler shows Addison's love of rural scenery -

'The walk which we marched up, for thickness of shades, embroidery of flowers, and melody of birds, with the distant purling of streams, and falls of water, was so wonderfully delightful, that it charmed our senses, and intoxicated our mind with pleasure.'

In Tatler No. 218, again, written by Addison, we ^{head} get a description of fields and meadows in summer, with flowers in their bloom. Addison here expresses the sense of relief which he felt -

'among several thickets and bushes, that were filled with a great variety of birds, and an agreeable confusion of notes, which formed the pleasantest scene in the world to one who had passed a whole winter in noise and smoke.'

Addison's description of Sir Roger de Coverley's country-seat in No.37 of the Spectator reminds us of the garden-poems of the period. Here is a small garden-scene from Addison's pen -

'The rocks about her shaped into artificial grottos covered with woodbines and jessamines. The woods are cut into shady walks, twisted into bowers, and filled with cages of turtles. The springs are made to run among pebbles, and by that means taught to murmur very agreeably.'

Addison noted with care the progress of the Chinese taste in the eighteenth century. In No. 69 of the Spectator, he says -

'Our rooms are filled with the Pyramids of China, and adorned with the workmanship of Japan'.

There is a reference to Chinese and Indian wares in No.552 of the Spectator. Addison elaborated his views on Chinese taste in The Lover No. 10 -

'There are no inclinations in women which more surprise me than their passions for chalk and china.'

Although Addison was an enemy of the craze for Chinese earthenware, he favoured the Chinese mode of wild luxuriance in gardening. In No. 414 of the Spectator, he showed a revulsion of feeling against the formal garden and recommended the Chinese mode of humouring Nature in gardening.

In 1713, that is, one year after Addison's last-mentioned essay, there appeared in the Guardian, No. 173 an essay on Gardening from Pope's pen. Horace Walpole, in his Anecdotes of Painting, points out the tremendous influence of this essay upon contemporary taste - 'The nation had been struck and reformed by the admirable paper the Guardian No. 173,'. In this famous essay Pope laments that the most celebrated seats or villas of the nation are lacking in beauty, arising from the 'amiable simplicity of unadorned Nature' - (1)

We seem to make it our study to recede from Nature, not only in the various tonsure of greens into the most regular and formal shapes, but in monstrous attempts beyond the reach of ~~A~~ the Art ~~it~~ itself. We run into sculpture, and are yet better pleased to have our trees in the most awkward figures of men and animals, than in the most regular of their own.'

Pope was directing his attack against topiary-work to which Horace Walpole gave the name 'verdant sculpture'. Pope and Addison were both preparing the way for the landscape-gardeners. Addison's essay in Spectator No. 583, contains an appeal to the nation to take to gardening -

'Had all the gentlemen of England made the same improvements upon their estates, our whole country would have been at this time as one great garden'.

This hint was taken up by the nation and the whole face of England was beautified by the untiring efforts of landscape-gardeners like Kent, Capability Brown, and Sir William Chambers.

(1) Horace Walpole, Anecdotes of Painting, Ch. VII on 'Modern Gardening' (Strawberry Hill Pr, Ed., 1762-71 : Vol. IV, p.136.

The Guardian contains, besides Pope's essay, some other essays bearing on taste. In No. 86 the writer recommends the classical writers as 'fountains of good sense and eloquence'. It is absolutely necessary for a young mind to form itself upon the classical models. Referring to pictorial description in poetry, the essayist shows breadth of sympathy by paying tribute to Eastern poetry -

'Great spirit in thought and energy in style in expressing violent motion are to be found more in the Eastern poetry than either in Greek or Roman.'

The Guardian (Nos. 99 and 167) gives us some Persian tales, illustrating the vogue for Eastern tales and allegories in the eighteenth century. The essays in the Guardian are strewn with metaphors borrowed from painting; one instance may be cited from Guardian No. 173 -

'Have any of any school of painters got an immortal name by drawing a face, or painting a landscape, by laying down on a piece of canvas a representation only of what Nature had given them originals?'

Joseph Warton's critical papers in the Adventurer (1753-1754), deserve special mention. At the invitation of Dr. Johnson, who was joint-editor of this journal with Hawkesworth, he wrote a set of papers with the avowed object of correcting taste. Addison had succeeded in bringing philosophy out of closets and libraries to dwell in Clubs and at tea-tables. Warton complains that the practice has degenerated into common prattle and it was his aim to bring criticism back to its proper level. In his paper on the Odyssey, he champions this poem as against the Iliad, the superiority of which was at that time almost universally taken for granted. Warton was attracted by the romanticism of the Odyssey -

'Greatness, novelty and beauty are usually and justly reckoned the three principal sources of the pleasures that strike the imagination. If the Iliad be allowed to abound in objects that may be referred to the first species, yet the Odyssey may boast a greater number of images that are beautiful and uncommon.'

The special feature of the Adventurer is the frequency with which it resorts to the Oriental Tale in which Hawkesworth particularly excelled. Hawkesworth showed greater constructive skill in these stories than Dr. Johnson did in his Eastern tales in the Rambler.

Comparing the earlier with the later periodicals of the eighteenth century, we notice points of difference in their attitude towards Nature. The early periodicals use the conventional epithets of pastoral poetry - epithets extensively used by the minor poets of the age. We may cite an instance from the Wanderer No. 10, (1717) -

'The crystal streams, which lately mourned in silence and are now relieved from the cold embraces of the frigid mass, and slide softly down, or wanton through their little channels in pleasing murmurs.'

As the century advanced and more invigorating influences began to pour in, a spirit of discontent and restlessness gradually made itself felt among the essayists. A deeper interest in Nature is found in the Mirror (No. 16) which appeared in 1779. In describing the effects of Spring, the writer eschewed the stock phrases of the earlier journalists and took a genuine ^{and} warm interest in Nature. In 1792 appeared a rural periodical called The Country Spectator with the object of developing pictures of country-life. The description of quiet, uneventful rural life in No. 17 reminds us of Cowper's rural pictures in The Task which had seen the light a few years before, that is, in 1785. The writer of

this journal was wholly wrong when he said in the opening essay that the Spectator, the Adventurer, the World and the Connoisseur had taken no interest in the country. We have already given many quotation from Addison and Steele showing their love of the country. In 1795 appeared the Trifler, and Edinburgh periodical with the object of

'conveying my readers into the country, and either give them a delineation of the innocent manners of rural life, or of the beauties of Nature.'

This lively interest in Nature in her quiet mood was a healthy sign of the times. People learnt to love Nature for her own sake. Nature ceased to be looked upon as a mere peg on which to hang moral sentiments. The didactic tone of the earlier periodicals becomes fainter and fainter as the century draws to its close. A Weekly paper, called Periodical Essays, published in 1780, shows a spirit of revolt against the accepted standards and conventions of the eighteenth century. The essays in the Spectator continued to exercise powerful influence on periodical literature down to the end of the century. The essayists took pride in imitating the didactic manner of Addison and his compeers. The editor of the Periodical Essays tried to stem the tide of popular taste -

'Exact imitation, even of that which is itself faultless and delightful, must become, by frequent repetition, tedious and disgusting.'

This is a clear note of revolt against the classical standard of taste. If we compare this essay with Hawkesworth's essays (Nos. 8 and 13), on Taste in the Spendthrift of an earlier date, that is, 1766, we find how Hawkesworth was hide-bound by the classical canons of correctness.

He trenchantly criticised Hogarth for his choice of unpleasant subjects, and in doing so he was rigidly following the convention of his age, which required that an artist must not go beyond the limits of certain well-defined subjects.

The essayist enters into a discussion of Beauty but, lacking in the gift of the literary artist, he fails in his purpose.

The Spendthrift (No.14) anticipated Sir Joshua Reynolds in pointing out the shallow dilettantism of men of taste who had travelled in Italy. This essay is the Diary of a Macaroni, that is, of a gentleman who has returned from his Grand Tour, and is now playing the part of a perfect connoisseur in all the polite arts.

From our treatment of the philosophers, art-critics and essayists, we find that they all aimed at analysing the springs of Beauty and of Art. They enlarged the bounds of aestheticism and provided the age with fresh ideals of taste. Each of these writers on aesthetics contributed, in his own way, to the development of the idea of the picturesque. Literature came to be considered in close relationship with the other arts, especially the art of painting. The gradual insistence on imagination contributed to change the entire outlook on art and the current of Taste began to move towards Romanticism. Some of the minor writers and essayists were no doubt simply voicing the sentiments of their predecessors, or representing the shifting tendencies of the age, yet their works are valuable to us

as a reflection of the contemporary ideas of Taste. A large number of essays in the periodicals, pointedly draws our attention to the various tastes of the day, such as Gothic, Chinese and Eastern tastes, tastes for the picturesque and for landscape-gardening. How far the potent ideas of the art-critics and aestheticians moulded the genius of literary men will form the subject of our enquiry in connection with these different strands of taste.

eighteenth century England, its origin may be traced to Lord Burlington who spent some years in Italy in the latter half of the seventeenth century. The Grand Tour was an exceptional feature in the seventeenth century, and Lord Burlington may rightfully claim to be its precursor in the eighteenth, because during the period of his stay in Italy the practice was firmly established. The Grand Tour received a great impetus after the Peace of Utrecht in 1713, which has been characterised as one of the great landmarks of international politics. (1) A tour round foreign courts and capitals came to be considered as an essential qualification for young noblemen of wealth and position. The youthful English aristocrat who shone as a prominent figure in Continental society, was a target of ridicule by the Foreigner for his insular eccentricities and by his own countrymen for his affectation of foreign speech and manners. Frequent refer-

letters of the eighteenth century, Lady Mary Wortley

(1) A.D. Innes, *History of England and the British Empire*, London: 1914, Vol. III, p. 111

CHAPTER II

THE GRAND TOUR AND GRAECO-ROMAN INFLUENCE ON THE TASTE OF THE XVIIIITH CENTURY

The Grand Tour which was a vital factor in the formation of Taste was a prominent feature of eighteenth century England. Its origin may be traced to Lord Burlington who spent some years in Italy in the latter half of the seventeenth century. The Grand Tour was an exceptional feature in the seventeenth century, and Lord Burlington may rightfully claim to be its precursor in the eighteenth, because during the period of his stay in Italy the practice was firmly established. The Grand Tour received a great impetus after the Peace of Utrecht in 1713, which has been characterised as one of the great landmarks of international politics. (1) A tour round foreign courts and capitals came to be considered as an essential qualification for young noblemen of wealth and position. The youthful English aristocrat who shone as a prominent figure in Continental society, was a target of ridicule by the foreigner for his 'insular eccentricities' and by his own countrymen for his affectation of foreign speech and manners. Frequent references to these young men are found in the memoirs and letters of the eighteenth century. Lady Mary Wortley

(1) A.D. Innes, History of England and the British Empire, London : 1914, Vol. III, p. 111.

Montagu writing to her daughter from Rome, where she lived from 1740-41 says-

'There was an unusual concourse of the English, and many of them with great estates and their own masters : as they had no admittance to the Roman ladies nor understood the language, they had no way of passing their evenings but in my apartment, where always I had a full drawing-roomI was judge of all their disputes, and my decisions always submitted to. While I stayed, there was neither gaming, drinking or quarrelling.'

It is with a band of young men like these that the Society of the Dilettanti was originally formed in 1734. 'The foundation of this Society marks the birth of modern England.' (1) This Society exercised considerable influence on questions of taste and fine arts in England and it gave a great stimulus to the study of Greek Art. The foundation of the Dilettanti Society in 1734 'set a seal on Taste as a fashionable necessity.' (2) Before this date the circle of the men of taste had been small. In Queen Anne's reign, this circle did not extend much beyond the limits of the Kit-Kat Club with Addison and Steele, Dodsley and Pope, Vanbrugh and Congreve, Kneller and a handful of number of rich men. The circle of the men of taste began to grow with the formation of the Dilettanti Society. As a small private body of gentlemen, the Society has for two hundred years exercised an active interest in matters connected with public taste and the arts in England. In the eighteenth century it was a sort of 'second cousin of the Royal Academy', including distinguished men like Sir Joshua Reynolds as its members. (3)

(1) Lionel Cust, History of the Dilettanti Society,
(London: 1914), p.2.

(2) Christopher Hussey, The Picturesque (1929), p.30.

(3) Dr. George Macmillan, The Society of the Dilettanti,
(London : 1932), p.6.

The Dilettanti Society has an interesting history of its own. Mr. Lionel Cust who has compiled the history under the editorship of Sir Sidney Colvin, has ably traced the development. At its inception the original members had not the faintest idea that the Society would play an important part in the future. Young aristocrats who had returned from their continental tours compared notes on their experiences and acquisitions. They wanted to be regarded as arbiters of taste and culture in their own country. They were probably attracted by the 'Society of the Virtuosi' founded in 1689, which consisted of 'Gentlemen, Painters, Sculptors, Architects etc. Lovers or Professors of Art'. The word 'virtuoso' which was in common vogue in the seventeenth century gradually gave place to the Italian word 'dilettante'.⁽¹⁾ The first meeting of the Dilettanti Society took place in Italy in December 1732. But the real date of the foundation of the Society is 1734, as will appear from the following words from the Preface to Stuart's Athenian Antiquities (1769)-

'In the year 1734 some gentlemen who had travelled in Italy, desirous of encouraging at home a taste for those objects which had contributed so much to their entertainment abroad, formed themselves into a Society under the name of the Dilettanti, and agreed upon such resolutions as they thought necessary to keep up the spirit of the scheme.'

(1) Dilettante strictly means one who delights in the fine arts, especially in Music and Poetry. In more recent times, since the foundation of the Royal Academy of Arts, there has been a tendency to differentiate more and more the professional from the amateur cultivator of arts. It is now used more as a term of depreciation to designate the amateur.

The first minute-book of the Society was preserved in 1736 and from this it appears that there were forty-six members in May of that year. Mr. Cust gives a vivid account of the manners and customs of the early members, some of which were not of the best, as will appear from Horace Walpole's letter to Sir Horace Mann (April 14, 1743) 'Their nominal qualification is having been in Italy, and the real one, being drunk : the two chiefs are Lord Middlesex and Sir Francis Dashwood, who were seldom sober the whole time they were in Italy.' Mr. Cust dwells at length on the convivial excesses and escapades of these early members. But notwithstanding their vivacious and jovial spirit, they were a band of young men with similar tastes in aesthetic and artistic matters. They started with no well-defined object for furthering the cause of Art. It is out of their social intercourse that a desire grew among them for guiding the public taste. The Dilettanti, including all the acknowledged virtuosi of the time, did something to establish an Italian opera ; they took the first step towards creating the Royal Academy of Arts ; they passed a resolution in 1761 on the motion of Sir Francis Dashwood for enriching the country with a gallery of casts; they were also connected with the pioneering activities of the British Museum. It would no doubt be incorrect to say that they founded all these institutions (as was claimed by one of its later members), but their subtle and indirect influence permeated through all these institutions. In the absence of an officially accredited Academy, the Society represented a body of

opinion in matters of art which could not but exercise considerable influence on the thought of the time.

From these laudable enterprizes at home the Dilettanti turned their attention to larger enterprizes abroad and in doing so they helped towards the formation of a new classical taste in the eighteenth century. The progress of the study of classical archaeology began in England in the middle of the seventeenth century. Charles I himself was a connoisseur of the first rank, and in 1649, at the sale of his property about four hundred statues fetched an enormous price. (1) It was Thomas Howard, the Earl of Arundel who first turned the attention of the people of Europe to the archaeological treasures of Greece, and the Arundel Marbles, which are famous seventeenth century collections of classical antiquity bear an eloquent testimony to his efforts in this direction. Some of his marbles adorn the Ashmolean at Oxford. Before the end of the seventeenth century, Thomas Herbert, eighth Earl of Pembroke had begun to amass statues which are at Wilton. But more concentrated ventures were necessary for exploring the remains of classical antiquity in Greece. It is to the Dilettanti Society that the chief credit of initiating such ventures belongs. In 1764, this Society as a united body threw such overwhelming weight into the scale that an eminent German scholar, Dr. Kruse, divides the history of Greece into five periods, the foundation of the Dilettanti Society being the starting-point of the fifth period.

(1) Eric Maclagan, 'Appreciation of Sculpture' in the Proceedings of the British Academy, Vol. XI, p. 317

Prof. Kruse says -

'With the foundation of the Society begins a period of the discovery of Greece, in which the greatest geographical and topographical accuracy is combined with the most accurate measurements of the ancient buildings.' (1)

The Society did good pioneer work in the study and furtherance of classical art and archaeology, and the eighteenth century will ever remain famous as the great age of English collecting. The Society equipped and despatched to Greece and Asia Minor trained draughtsmen and scholars, who came back laden, not so much with the spoils of actual remains, but with notes and drawings which took the shape of admirable literary publications.

The year 1764 has been definitely mentioned by Prof Kruse as a starting-point because it is in this year that the Dilettanti Society sent Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Chandler, Mr. Revett and Mr. Pars to Greece and Asia Minor. But an earlier date, namely, 1762 will be more accurate in the history of the revival of classical archaeology in the eighteenth century. Two years before the expedition of Chandler and his party, James Steart (known as 'Athenian Stuart') and Nicholas Revett had published the Antiquities of Athens in 1762 as a result of their travels in Athens, and the expenses of this publication were borne by the Dilettanti Society. A still earlier date, that is, 1751, indicates the starting-point from which the Dilettanti

(1) Dr. F.C.H. Kruse, Professor of History and Geography at the Universities of Halle and Wittenburgh in Germany, in his Hellas, or 'Geographical and Antiquarian Researches into the State of Ancient Greece and her Colonies, with special reference to Modern Discoveries 1825 ; quoted by Lionel Cust (op. cit.)

Society began to give a stimulus to archaeological discoveries. It was in March 1751 that Stuart and Revett were elected members of this Society, when they were living at Venice. Their election marks a departure from the practice of selecting wealthy social ~~social~~ leaders. (1)

The writers of the article on 'Taste' in Johnson's England have traced the history of classical taste in England from 1749 when Lord Charlemont and Dalton travelled in Greece and published their first engravings of the Parthenon and the Erechtheum. Lord Charlemont has been described as 'the first connoisseur to discriminate between Greek and Roman Art' and as the pioneer in the field of Classical Revival. But whatever might be their claims to precedence, their influence was not so great as that of Stuart and Chandler.

The epoch-making First Volume of The Antiquities of Athens published in 1762 produced an extraordinary effect upon English society. 'Grecian gusto' became the fashionable craze of the time. On tracing the history of the classical revival, or what has been styled 'the classical predilection of the English mind', we find that it is a revival or new expression of the Renaissance spirit. From the early times of the Renaissance, Italy, Rome and the neighbouring regions had yielded up remains of ancient architecture and thereby had influenced profoundly the arts and tastes of Europe. It is interesting to note that in the eighteenth

(1) J.T. Smith says in his famous Nollekens and His Times-
 'Stuart's genius soared to the pinnacle of fame by flying to Athens for those inestimable treasures which will immortalise his name.' Stuart was a friend of Nollekens, the great sculptor.- (Worlds's Cl ; 1929, pp.15-16)

century classical taste gradually shifted from Italy to Greece. It is the supreme glory of the Dilettanti Society to have realised that the remains in Italy were but a faint reflection of 'the pure light of Hellenic art and culture', the true source of which is to be found on the soil of Greece, in Asia Minor or the Archipelago. The Dilettanti Society, instead of sending Stuart, Chandler and Revett to the Italian soil, sent them to Greece and the coasts of Asia Minor, and spent two thousand pounds for that purpose. The famous Antiquities were followed by other volumes giving romantic descriptions of these places. In 1769, the Society published The Ionian Antiquities in three volumes which are a bare scientific record of travels. Dr. Chandler published at his own cost Inscriptions (1774), Travels in Asia Minor (1775) and Travels in Greece (1776) - all of which are dedicated by him to the Dilettanti Society. The last two works breathe a fine literary spirit and evince love of natural scenery and picturesque description.

It would not be out of place in this connection to show by quotations from Chandler's works how he was directing the minds of men in the eighteenth century to new channels. We breathe the pure Hellenic spirit as we go through the pages of Chandler's Travels in Greece. The following description of the monastery in the island and town of Poro shows that the traveller had an eye for the picturesque and the romantic.

'We landed and went to the monastery, which is at some distance from the sea, the situation high and romantic, near a deep torrent-bed. It was surrounded by green vineyards; thickets of myrtle, orange and lemon-trees in blossom; the arbutus with fruit, large but unripe; the oleander or piero-daphne, and the olive, laden with flowers, sweet-smelling

pinces and evergreens. Opposite is a fountain much celebrated.' (1)

Chandler's books are full of luscious descriptions, stirring up associations connect~~ed~~ with Keats's sensuous imageries. In Smyrna he found

'rich clusters of grapes as wholesome as beautiful. Lemons and oranges with citrons are in plenty. The sherbets made with the juice of the two former, sweetened with honey, are as cooling and grateful to the taste.' (2)

He found Tenedos 'green with olive-trees and with vines, the grapes hanging in clusters rich and tempting.' (3)

We catch a glimpse of Eastern plenty and magnificence and it is very probable that Byron's genius was inspired by these accounts when he wrote the following lines on the East, 'the land of cypress and myrtle', in his Bride of Abydos -

'Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever ~~shin~~ shine

.....
Where the citron and olive are the fairest of fruit
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute.'

We get a foretaste of Byron in Chandler's rich description of the 'golden island' of Zante -

'Its valleys sheltered by high, bare mountains, well-cultivated, and rich in their produce and pleasant to the eye; the soil suiting the vine and olive, orange, lemon and citron-trees. Its wines and oils are deservedly extolled. Its melons and peaches are of uncommon size and exquisite flavour.' (4)

The gorgeous description of Smyrna reads like Shelley's prose-letters from Rome-

'The flowers renew the verdure, with marigolds and anemones springing spontaneously from the turfs beneath

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- (1) Dr. Chandler, Travels in Greece, Ch. xlix
(2) Dr. Chandler, Travels in Asia Minor, Ch. xix
(3) Ibid, Ch. vii
(4) Dr. Chandler, Travels in Greece, Ch. lxxix

the olive-trees in great profusion. Thickets of myrtle in blossom adorned the waste ; and in the gardens, the golden fruit glittered among the deep-green leaves of the orange-trees.' (1)

Passing through the Straits of Gibraltar, Chandler and his party saw 'a delightful spectacle beyond imagination.' The burning sides of the sea-monsters

'reflected the rays of the sun, which then shone in a picturesque sky, of clear azure, softened by thin fleecy clouds, imparting cheerfulness to the waves, which seemed to smile on us.' (2)

Referring to their entry into the Mediterranean, Chandler says- 'No ~~ideas~~ words can convey the ideas excited by scenes of so much novelty, grandeur and beauty.'

These passages go to show how the Grand Tour had an educative value in the formation of taste. Beautiful descriptions of sun-rise and sun-set abound everywhere-

'The dawn soon after began to disclose the blue tops of the mountains, and the sun rising coloured the sky with a rich variety of tints. The air was soft and fragrant.' (3)

The following picturesque sun-set which Dr. Chandler saw through the passage of Gibraltar would remind one of Coleridge's Ancient Mariner -

'To complete this wonderful day, the sun before its setting was exceedingly big, and assumed a variety of fantastic shapes. It was surrounded first with a golden glory, of great extent, and flamed upon the surface of the sea in a long column of fire....after many twinklings and faint glimmerings slowly disappeared quite red, leaving the clouds hanging over the dark rocks, finely tinged with a vivid bloody hue.' (4)

Chandler saw the sun-set with an eye of wonder and his

(1) Dr. Chandler, Travels in Asia Minor, Ch. xxii

(2) Ibid, Ch. i

(3) Ibid, Ch. xxxii

(4) Ibid, Ch. i

descriptions are somewhat romantic. We read with delight his poetic description of the caves as

' a retreat for the nymphs, where they might find shelter and provision, if distressed ; whether the sun parched up the trees, or Jupiter enthroned in clouds upon the mountain-top scared them with his red lightning and terrible thunder, pouring down a deluge of rain, or brightening the summits with his snow.' (1)

Chandler takes us to Mount Helicon, the fabled abode of the Muses-

'Helicon was one of the most fertile and woody mountains in Greece. On it the fruit of the strawberry tree was uncommonly sweet and the plants and roots were all friendly to man, and that even the serpents had their poison weakened by the innoxious qualities of their food. It approached Parnassus on the North, and resembled that mountain in loftiness, extent and magnitude. The Muses were the proprietors of Helicon. There was their shady grove, and their images with statues of Apollo and Bacchus and Orpheus, and the illustrious poets, who had recited their verses to the harp. On the left hand, going to the grove was the fountain of the Aganippe, and higher up the violet-coloured Hippocrene. The valleys of Helicon are green and flowery in spring, and enlivened by pleasing cascades and streams, and by fountains and streams of clear water.' (2)

In writing this vivid description, Chandler had probably in mind the following lines from Gray's Progress of Poesy written in 1757-

'Where each old poetic Mountain
Inspiration breathed around :
Every shade and hallowed fountain
Murmured deep a solemn sound.'

In his description of the river Ilissus, Chandler evidently referred to Gray's lines, while correcting a popular misconception of the poets. Gray wrote in his Progress of Poesy -

'Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles that crown the AEgean deep
Fields that cool Ilissus laves
Or where Meander's amber waves
In lingering lab'rinth creep.'

(1) Dr. Chandler, Travels in Greece, Ch. xxxii

(2) Ibid, Ch. lxiv

Chandler breaks through the glamour of enchantment by describing the actual features of the place -

'The poets who celebrate the Ilissus, as a stream laving the fields, cool, lucid and the like, have both conceived and conveyed a false idea of this renowned water-course. They may bestow a willow-fringe on its naked banks, amber-waves on the muddy Meander and the hanging woods on the bare steep of Delphi, if they please ; but the foundation of Nature would be wanting, nor is it easy for a descriptive writer, when he exceeds the sphere of his own observation, to avoid falling into local absurdities and untruths.' (1)

Chandler further points out that the water of Ilissus is not 'cool' as Gray's lines would suggest, nor is there any current in the river to justify the poet's description of 'laving' the fields. On the other hand

'The water of the river is so bad that the cattle would scarcely drink of it. It is an occasional torrent ; in summer it is quite dry.'

Chandler also indicates similar mistakes on the part of the painters who have reproduced the Ilissus in full stream.

Chandler's pictorial description of Greek temples and statues undoubtedly exercised a great influence on the formation of classical taste. He conveys the impression of magnitude in his description of the Temple of Jupiter Olympus -

'a specimen of the only temple in the world designed with a grandeur worthy of the ruler of heaven, and exciting astonishment in every beholder ... noble ideas of magnitude and exact symmetry. The image of jupiter is worth seeing, made of ivory and gold and with art as will be perceived by those who consider its magnitude.' (2)

Chandler regales us with a gorgeous description of the Parthenon or the great temple of Minerva, and he gives us a perfect word-picture of the statue of Minerva-

(1) Dr. Chandler, Travels in Greece, Ch.xii

(2) Ibid, Ch. xv.

'The Statue of Minerva made for this temple by Pheidias, was of ivory, 26 ft. or 39 ft. high. It was decked with pure gold. The goddess is represented standing, with her vestment reaching to her feet. The helmet had a sphinx for the crest and on the side were Griffins. The head of Medusa was on her breast-plate. In one hand she held her spear, and in the other, supported the image of Victory. The battle of the Centaurs and the Lapithae were carved on her sandals ; and on her shield, which lay at her feet, the war of the gods and giants, and the battle of the Athenians and the Amazons. By her spear was a Serpent ; and on the pedestal, the birth of Pandora. The Sphinx, the Victory and the Serpent, were accounted eminently wonderful.' (1)

In this and other passages Chandler attempted to convey the aesthetic impression produced by the ancient Greek statues of the gods with their chief characteristic of an exalted and unruffled calm and serenity. Chandler realised the strength of Greek artistic genius- its sense of balance and proportion. There is another deep artistic significance in Chandler's description of the gods. The Greeks found in the gods ideal types of humanity - 'perfectly formed, perfectly proportioned, noble and serene ; in one word, beautiful.' (2)

Chandler's description of the ruins of ancient architecture gives a graphic picture of the grandeur that was Greece. The following gives a happy glimpse into the wonders of the great Periclean age-

' Pericles, a man distinguished by the correctness of his taste employed architects like Pheidias. To grandeur of proportion was added inimitable form and graceEach fabric was as Nature in perfection, as if it had been long in finishing.... The structures of Pericles alone demonstrated the relations of the ancient power and wealth of Hellas not to be romantic. In their character was an excellence peculiar and unparalleled. Even then they retained all their original beauty. A certain freshness bloomed upon them, and preserved their faces uninjured ; as if they possessed a

(1) Dr. Chandler, Travels in Greece, Ch. x.

(2) Herbert Read, Meaning of Beauty, pp.4-5

never-fading spirit, and had a soul insensible to age. The remains of some of these edifices, still extant in the Acropolis, cannot be beheld without admiration.' (1)

The sense of wonder and admiration which the Grecian ruins evoked in Chandler sprang from his recognition of the unique completeness of the inner life of the Greeks. This inner life, intellectual or imaginative, expressed itself in every medium and it excelled in all the arts. Chandler was a lover of the Doric order of architecture, to which there are repeated references. He describes Athens as the seat of culture and the 'centre of taste and genius', 'humanising and polishing the conquerors of the world! He pays tribute to her Philosophy, Eloquence and Gymnasia. He preferred Grecian to Roman taste, and finding excessive sculpture lavished on edifice, he deplores the style as 'favouring less of Grecian taste than Roman magnificence.' The spectacular grandeur of the ancient ruins and the ravages of time sometimes cast a spell of melancholy upon Chandler's mind and he realised that the paths of glory lead but to the grave-

'The mansions of the illustrious dead, like the bodies which they covered, are consumed, and have disappeared. Time, violence and the plough have levelled all, without distinction : equally inattentive to the soldier, the artist and the physician ... To omit the research would merit the anger of the Muses.' (2)

Nor is Chandler's account merely confined to descriptions of ancient ruins. He touches also upon the manners and morals of the people. He gives vivid pictures of the dress and manners of Turkish, Grecian and Albanian women in Chapter xxvi of The Travels of Greece. His accounts of foreign manners and customs are enlivened with touches of gentle humour.

(1) Dr. Chandler, Travels in Greece, Ch. viii

(2) Ibid, Ch. xxii

Lord Byron's genius must have been inspired by Chandler's rich Eastern descriptions. The poet belonging to the rank of the nobility surely came in contact with the circle of the Dilettanti of which Chandler and his fellow-travellers were members. Byron had his own share of experiences in the East ; and he must have relished with zest, and borrowed some hints from, Chandler's descriptions of Eastern manners.

On turning to Stuart and Revetts' Athenian Antiquities we find frequent references to the taste and elegance of the Greeks. They speak of 'the majestic simplicity', the pure and pervading beauty' of the Doric and Ionic orders. Our attention is repeatedly drawn to the 'purity of Greek taste, with its antipathy to all coarseness and exaggeration.'⁽¹⁾ The Ionic temple on the Ilissus is described as a sort of test of excellence in Art by reason of its simplicity and marvellous beauty. It is called 'the fine memorial of Grecian taste'⁽²⁾ Stuart and Revett point out that inspite of the severe simplicity and absolute symmetry which the Greeks followed in architecture, they sometimes sought relaxation in 'faultless elaboration' and various other devices. They also direct our attention to the fact that-

' the Greeks did not know, or knowing, deliberately rejected- what would now be considered as an essential distinction between painting and sculpture. The Greeks painted simple ornaments, cornices, capitals, ceilings, backgrounds, freizes, armour, draperies of the Temple of Theseus ; we cannot reconcile our habits of taste and feeling to this.' (3)

(1) Athenian Antiquities, (Bohn's ed.), p.11

(2) Ibid, p.14

(3) Ibid, p.101.

The influence of Hellenic art in the formation of taste cannot be over-estimated. Although Aristotle, Plato and Longinus did not map out sharply the field of aesthetics yet their work form the basis of most of our modern aesthetic theory. The Greeks had a profound and genuine feeling for art as an essential element of life, closely connected with spiritual, moral, social and political values. Art was a powerful and all-pervading factor in Greek civilisation. (1) The classical vogue in the eighteenth century was a step in the right direction. The Grand Tour, the efforts of the Dilettanti Society and the archaeological discoveries- all these influences were contributing to guide men's taste along proper channels to the pure fountain of Hellenic Art.

The activities of the Dilettanti Society lasted down to the end of the century. The publications of the Society revealed to the world the beauty and value of ancient remains and gave a great stimulus to the revival of the classic style. Henceforth the energy of collectors became untiring. The average Englishman enjoyed exceptional facilities for two centuries for filling his mind with impressions of Graeco-Roman statues. The great English houses attained celebrity for their collection of antique marbles. Simultaneously with the Dilettanti Society, Holkham was being enriched by Thomas Coke, Earl of Leicester, and Petworth by the second Earl of Egremont. A little later came Charles Townley, whose marbles ultimately found their way into the British Museum. Henry Blundell, the first Marquess of Lansdowne, Thomas Hope and Sir Richard Worsley

(1) Dr. Camillo Pellizzi, 'Romanticism and Regionalism' (Annual Italian Lecture, 1929), Proceedings of the British Academy, 1929, Vol. XV, p.140.

of Hovingham were all notable collectors. The fashion for collecting antiques disseminated the classical taste in wider circles. The appreciation of classical sculpture became deep and wide-spread in the country. The traveller on making his way to Italy turned eagerly to the antique marbles. From the end of the seventeenth century to early nineteenth century the rich English connoisseurs vied with each other in furnishing their homes with statues and busts purchased during their Grand Tour ⁱⁿ Italy. 'It is to their efforts that England still remains a great deal richer than any other country this side of the Alps in such treasures.' (1)

Thomas Harrison who was nurtured in the classical tradition of Stuart and Revett was appointed by Lord Elgin in 1796 to build his house in Fifeshire. When Lord Elgin was appointed to the embassy at Constantinople, Harrison suggested to him the possibility of obtaining casts and drawings of the remains of ancient sculpture at Athens for his new mansion. Finding deliberate destruction of valuable ruins. Lord Elgin removed as many marbles as he could from Athens with the object of preserving them from further ravages. His action enhanced the knowledge and love of Greek art throughout cultured Europe. It is regrettable that the Dilettanti, far from recognising his merits, treated him at first with coldness and then took up a hostile attitude. Richard Payne Knight, whose aesthetics we have discussed in the first chapter, was the most famous member of the Dilettanti Society at that time. He discredited the marbles in his Preliminary Essay to the first volume of

(1) Eric Maclagan, 'The Appreciation of Sculpture' (Annual Lecture on Aspects of Art, 1925), Proceedings of the British Academy, 1924-25, Vol. XI, p.316.

The Specimens of Ancient Sculpture . A long controversy followed in which the leading connoisseurs took one or the other side. The painter Haydon was a great champion of Lord Elgin. Keats's intimacy with Haydon through Leigh Hunt is well-known. Keats's imagination was stirred by the Elgin Marbles and helped him in his most ambitious effort, The Hyperion. The discovery of a delightful ideal type of art gave a stimulus to his poetic imagination. The opening of Hyperion presents us with the colossal figures of Saturn and Thea . The poem raises grand images before our eyes. As in Chandler's descriptions, we find a group of statuary standing before us. But Keats raised the statues to a higher power by the transfiguring gift of his poetic imagination. In the language of Mr. Laurence Binyon,- 'We feel alike their grandeur and their reality. They do not suggest the graceful or merely grandiose figures of Graeco-Roman sculpture and its modern imitations, but something far more elemental and august. They are conceived from within, with an imaginative penetration which finds expression in such touches as Saturn's "realmless eyes" ' (1) Keats's poem is, however, a good example of the influence of the remains of classical antiquity on poetical taste. The marbles gave to the poets a new revelation of ideal art.

In the eighteenth century the discoveries of Stuart and Chandler stirred the imagination of all lovers of art and of the entire reading public generally. The 'Grecian gusto' became such a craze that classical types of architecture were applied to domestic use. Sir Reginald Blomfield considers this kind of classical

(1) Laurence Binyon, 'English Poetry in Its Relation to the Arts', Proceedings of the Br. Acad., 1917-18, p.400

imitation as an evil and deplores the loss of national tradition -

'Unfortunately when Greek architecture was discovered in the second half of the eighteenth century, it became the shibboleth of the 'virtuosi'. The national tradition was lost ; Greek architecture became the fashion, and the misguided enthusiasm of pedants and amateurs insisted on literal reproductions which compelled the extinction of architecture as a vernacular art, and replaced it by the series of revivalisms for which it has suffered for the last 150 years.' (1)

Whatever might have been the loss of national tradition as a result of a too close reproduction of the Greek style of architecture, this is more than counterbalanced by an immense gain. The warmth and radiance of the new spirit of classical antiquity imparted new life to English art of the eighteenth century. The Greek sense of simple, serene and exquisite beauty reformed the taste of men and made them turn their eyes from the extravagance and formlessness of seventeenth century art. The lesson of Greek art was 'a steadfast vision of beauty realising itself ^{not} in complex detail, but in a serene and exquisite simplicity of form'. The severe restraint, the chiselled perfection of form which we find in much of the eighteenth century poetry was an outcome of the Graeco-Roman spirit.

In the same year, 1764, when the activities of the Dilettanti Society were giving an impetus to the classical revival, Winckelmann published his History of Ancient Art which had great influence on eighteenth century

(1) Sir Reginald Blomfield, 'Architecture', Legacy of Greece, Oxford, p.421.

thought. His analysis of the principles of Greek Art taught men that 'static pose' is the chief quality of Hellenic serenity. The sculpture of the eighteenth century bears the stamp of this quality. The seventeenth century taste for 'fluttering braggadocio movement' gave place to peace and quiet^e arising from symmetry.

Not only sculpture, but every branch of art in the eighteenth century was permeated by the classical spirit. A close connection was established in men's minds between classical antiquity and correct taste. Imitation of the classical model was regarded as the only way to perfection in art. The ideas of an artist were regarded as a mere 'parcel of whimsies', unless he had formed his taste upon the ancients. The wide-spread influence of Greek Art was felt in the everyday life of the eighteenth century Englishman - in his houses, stables, furniture and jewellery. The minor arts were freed from the exuberance of ornament. Horace Walpole who may be regarded as a barometer of contemporary English taste, has not failed to record his appreciation of this new craze -

'We English are living upon their (of the Greeks) gods and goddesses. I roll about in a chariot decorated with Cupids, and look like the grandfather of Adonis.' (1765) (1)

The classical revival played an important part in this 'age of Landscape', that is , the period from 1726, the year of the publication of Thomson's Winter to 1800. The writers of ancient Greece had discerned close relationship between poetry and painting. The eighteenth century writers were very fond of comparing their favourite

(1) Horace Walpole, Letters, ed. by Mrs. Paget Toynbee, Oxford, Vol. VI, p.302.

painters with their favourite writers. Men of this age looked at Poetry, Gardening, Architecture and Painting from a picturesque point of view, in connection with the country-side. The various arts came under the category of the landscape-art. The painter illustrated episodes from the poet ; the gardener copied the painter ; the landscape-architect designed buildings after the manner of the painter. At the time Lessing wrote his Laokoon, poetry and art were looked upon as having the same sphere. The saying of Simonides that 'painting is mute poetry, and poetry eloquent painting' was interpreted to mean that whatever the one can do the other may also accomplish. Although the Laokoon attempted to stem the tide of this taste by making the difference between Art and Poetry sufficiently clear, the leaven of Greek influence still continued to work in the eighteenth century treatment of the picturesque. The arts were linked together through the common tie of the picturesque.

The bonds of the Graeco-Roman tradition in criticism fastened themselves firmly on the public mind. (1) Not only Greek Art , but the Greek criticism of Plato, Aristotle and Longinus exercised a potent influence upon the men of the eighteenth century, especially upon Shaftesbury, Addison, Hume and Lord Kames. Shaftesbury was deeply read in the classics- in Plato, Aristotle, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus and Epictetus and his aesthetic theories about moral virtue were largely drawn upon the last two sources. In his Advice to An Author and Miscellaneous Reflections we catch ^{a glimpse} of the principles of Greek

(1) Eric Maclagan, 'The Appreciation of Sculpture', Proceedings of the British Academy, 1924-25, Vol. XI, p. 318.

criticism in relation to aesthetics. Prof. Churton Collins has truly characterised Shaftesbury as 'one of the most Hellenic of Englishmen in temper and taste.' (1)

Greek influence on Addison is felt in his critical papers on Milton's Paradise Lost which he judged from the canons of criticism laid down by Aristotle in his Poetics and by Longinus in his Treatise on the Sublime. From our discussion of Addison as an aesthetic critic in the first chapter we have found that although Addison was chained to the classical conventions of Aristotle, he took a healthy common-sense view of poetry. We have also seen that he was indebted to Longinus through the Italian influence of Muratori. Addison's Grand Tour was restricted to France and Italy and critics have made much of the Latin element in him. Bishop Hurd characterises his prose as Virgilian. His poetical Letter from Italy, his prose discourse on The Medals and prose Remarks on Several Parts of Italy go to show the extent of the Italian influence on him. According to Prof. J.G. Robertson, Addison's literary criticism represents the dominance of Italy rather than of Greece in the eighteenth century- 'It is Italy rather than Greece, which played the pioneer part in the eighteenth century in the field of literary criticism, and fixed men's attention on creative imagination as the ultimate source of all inspiration. Italy was regarded as the exemplar of the Renaissance spirit. To Italy we must look for the forerunners of the movement in England which put a new complexion on the eighteenth century.' (2)

(1) Prof. Churton Collins, Greek Influence on English Poetry, p.94.

(2) Prof. J.G. Robertson, Studies in the Genesis of Romantic Theory in the XVIIIth Century, (Cambridge :1923), p.4

Dr. Johnson who is the true type and representative of the classical spirit in the eighteenth century leaned on the Roman rather than on the Greek side. Prof. Churton Collins calls him 'the most anti-Hellenic of English critics.' (1)

The influence of Longinus was very great in the eighteenth century. Pope eulogised him in the following lines-

'Thee bold Longinus, all the Nine inspire
And bless their critic with a poet's fire,
An ardent judge who zealous in his trust
With warmth gives sentence but is always just,
Whose own example strengthens all his laws,
And is himself that great sublime he draws.' (2)

Longinus's work containing hints on the essential elements of an impressive style moulded English thought and judgment in this century. Longinus was in favour of skilfully ordered composition, which avoided tumidity, affectation and bad taste. Pope's ideas of clarity fitted in well with the doctrine of Longinus. Hume derived his canons of criticism from the Greek writers in his literary essays- 'On Eloquence', 'On Tragedy', 'On Simplicity and Refinement in Writing' and 'On the Standard of Taste.'

Hellenism diffused its influence slowly through every branch of life, thought and art in the eighteenth century. The institution of the Grand Tour, the activities of the Dilettanti Society, the publications of Stuart and Chandler and the archaeological discoveries contributed to the diffusion of such influence. By the time Shelley wrote the following lines in his Preface to Hellas, Hellenic art and culture had thoroughly penetrated into English life

'We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature,
our religion, our arts have their roots in Greece.' (3)

(1) Churton Collins, Op.Cit, p.96.

(2) Pope, Essay on Criticism, ll.674-679 (Globe ed. p.66)

(3) Shelley, Poetical Works, ed. by Buxton Forman
(Aldine ed., London : 1892), Vol. IV, pp.38-39

CHAPTER III

'PICTURESQUE' POETS

I

From very early times man has looked with interest on the features of Nature around him and with the development of poetry and painting these natural features have received more and more vivid artistic expression. Despite Lessing's theories, the function of both painter and poet is essentially the same, because both exhibit Nature as seen through their individual soul. We have seen in the second chapter how with the rise of the idea of the picturesque in the eighteenth century a close connection was established between painting, poetry, gardening and the other arts. The idea that the eighteenth century, until the last two decades, was generally blind to the beauties of external Nature, has long become exploded. Painting played a large part in the development of landscape in England and the influence of the French and Italian landscape-painters of the seventeenth century - Claude Lorrain, Salvator Rosa and Poussin - is very largely felt upon the landscape-poets, landscape-painters, and landscape-gardeners of the eighteenth century. (1)

(1) Mrs. Nollekens always made the observation - 'It is ~~always~~ very remarkable that Claude, Salvator Rosa and Nicholas Poussin lived close beside each other on the Trinita del Monte.' - J.T.Smith, Nollekens and His Times (Worlds Cl.), p.62.

The year 1640 has been taken by Miss Manwaring (1) as a very important date in the history of landscape, because it was in this year that landscape was rooted in the popular mind as an important branch of painting and it was from this year that the popularity of Claude and Salvator began to rise and the fashion set by them gained currency over the Continent. She further notes that the year 1640 is important as the date of the writing of Denham's Cooper's Hill (the poem being actually published two years later in 1642) which inspired the tendency to local poetry in Windsor Forest, Grongar Hill and The Seasons. (2)

Claude, Salvator Rosa and Poussin helped to strengthen the taste for landscape-painting. Thomson has touched upon Nicholas Poussin's classical tastes -

' From Rome, awhile, how Painting, courted long,
With Poussin came ; Ancient Design, that lifts
A fairer front, and looks another Soul.' (3)

West in his letter to Gray wrote - 'Poussin gave a beauty to his pictures by his knowledge in the ancient proportions.' (4) Nicholas Poussin (1594-1665) represents the spirit of reason and intellectuality. His art is guided by the Greek law of unity, balance and harmony and his figures are statuesque.

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- (1) E.W.Manwaring, Italian Landscape in XVIIIth Century England : A Study chiefly of the Influence of Claude Lorrain and Salvator Rosa on English Taste, 1700-1800 (The Wellesley Semi-centennial series), New York : 1925.
 - (2) The first pirated edition of Denham's Cooper's Hill appeared in 1642 and it went through five editions before 1655. For more than a century it was one of the most famous poems in the language.- Theodore H.Banks, 'Sir John Denham's Cooper's Hill', Modern Language Review, XXI (1926), p.269.
 - (3) Thomson, Liberty, Part V (The Prospect), Gilfillan's ed p.270
 - (4) Correspondence of Gray, Walpole, West and Ashton , ed. by Dr. Paget Toynbee, Vol.II, p.31.

His paintings show restrained imagination, his figures being selected with great care, with nothing superfluous or exaggerated in them. Poussin's own view of critical judgment harmonised with the ideas of the eighteenth century - 'To judge well is very difficult. To do so requires theory and practice. Reason, and not appetite, should control the judgment.' (1) On the test of judging Art Poussin held - 'Our brave ancient Greeks, inventors of all beautiful things, have discovered several modes. The word 'mode' means reason and measure. Reason compels us not to go beyond certain limits, to study Nature with moderation and intelligence, to keep in each work a definite order.' (2) These views were undoubtedly acceptable to the palate of the men of the age of reason. Poussin's classical tastes existed side by side with a taste for the picturesque. The complete harmony of the various picturesque elements in Nature appeared to Poussin to be the chief thing desirable in painting. He pointed out that painting and sculpture are both imitative arts, the basis of each being design. Poussin's own theories have been illustrated in his paintings which are marked by the beauty of the general effect, the eloquence of expression and the unity of impression. (3)

In another passage Thomson speaks of Claude, Salvator Rosa and Poussin in the same breath-

'Whate'er Lorrain light-touched with softening hue,
Or savage Rosa dashed, or learned Poussin drew.' (4)

These words bring out the secret that underlies the art of the three great landscapists. Both Poussin and Claude were

(1) Elizabeth H. Denio, Nicholas Poussin : His Life and Work, London, 1899

(2) Ibid, p.182

(3) Emile Michel, Great Masters of Landscape-Painting, (London : 1910)

(4) Thomson, The Castle of Indolence, Canto I, ll.341-342.

followers of the classical tradition, but Claude was not so learned and intellectual as Poussin. Claude is 'the first and foremost enthusiastic lover of Nature.' (1) In his pure poetic feeling for Nature, unsophisticated by intellectuality, Claude comes nearest to Thomson.

As we have attempted to show the pervasive influence of Claude upon eighteenth century English art - painting, poetry and gardening - it would not be out of place to indicate some of his essential features. Sir Joshua Reynolds in his Fourth Discourse points out Claude's masterly power of combining separate scenes of Nature into one idealised whole for securing quietness and repose to his pictures. (2) Ruskin allotted to Claude the glory among painters of having set the sun in the heavens, and Claude's paintings show how he excelled in the treatment of diffused sunshine. His fondness for space and light always induced him to reserve an important place for the sky and sea in his landscape. These two things fascinated him most in Nature and he was at his best in depicting these aspects. The peaceful atmosphere pervading Claude's pictures appealed to the poets of the eighteenth century who sought for peace and repose in the country. Claude's serene and gay prospects moulded the taste of artists. Fertile countries, sleeping waters and streamlets flowing with a gentle murmur - all of which are found in plenty on Claude's canvas - have been reproduced by the English poets of the century who sought for calm and repose in Nature. Beautiful shadows are a very important feature

(1) Archer M. Hind, Claude Lorrain and Modern Art, (Cambridge Rede Lecture), Cambridge : 1926, p.15.

(2) Sir Joshua Reynolds, Discourses, (The Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, ed. by E. Malone, 3rd ed., London : 1801, Vol. I, P.105)

in Claude's paintings. These shadows are so clear in his canvas that all the details can be seen through them. Claude's method was different from Rembrandt's. Rembrandt veiled the light, permitting only a few rays to come through the shade : in Claude every space is filled up with brilliant light.

Critics are divided in their opinion on the question of Thomson's indebtedness to Claude. Challenging the theory that but for Claude there would have been no Thomson, Sir Edmund Gosse says - 'The only way in which it is probable to lessen the apparent miracle of Thomson's landscapes is to suppose that he was not unfamiliar with the paintings of Claude Lorrain and Gaspard Poussin.' (1) Gosse cites a letter written by Thomson to Dr. Cranston in September 1725 (preceding the publication of his earliest poem) showing that his taste for landscape had already been formed. The letter runs thus -

'Now I imagine you seized with a fine, romantic kind of melancholy on the fading of the year ; now I figure you wandering, philosophical and pensive, amidst the brown, withered groves, while the leaves rustle under your feet, the sun gives a farewell, parting gleam When the heavens wear a more gloomy aspect, the winds whistle, and the waters spout, I see you in the well-known cleugh, beneath the solemn arch of tall, thick, embowering trees, listening to the amusing lull of the many steep, moss-grown cascades, while deep divine Contemplation, the genius of the place, prompts each swelling awful thought Nature delights me in every form.'

(1) Sir Edmund Gosse, Introduction to The Seasons, Muses Library, p.xxii.

Thomson's early feeling for landscape as expressed in this letter resembles Claude's poetic sense in the simple and truthful rendering of natural scenery. Thomson had a refined taste in pictures, and during his Italian tour he collected drawings and engravings of the old masters. The walls of his cottage were also adorned with numerous pictures. Besides, he was in close touch with Bubb Doddington, the *Mæcenas* of his time, to whom he dedicated his Summer .(1) The feelings expressed by Thomson in one of his letters to this patron are identical with those which had inspired Claude.

'The storing one's imagination with ideas of all-beautiful, all-great, and all-perfect Nature - these are the true materia poetica, the light and colours with which fancy kindles up her whole creation, paints a sentiment, and even embodies an abstract thought.'

This very sentiment lay at the root of Claude's artistic ^{na} training. Claude sat from morning till evening in the open field, with a note-book in his hand, noticing every change in the prospect caused by light and shade, and he never left the place until the last ray of the setting sun had departed, leaving an impression upon his memory.

The 'softening hue' of Claude Lorrain represents one essential type of landscape which existed side by side with another great type represented by 'savage Rosa'. If Claude be the precursor of Thomson, Salvator Rosa may be likened to Macpherson or Byron in his delineation of the tremendous destructive forces of Nature. Salvator painted the awe and horror which strike the traveller as he crosses the Alpine crags. He had a deep sense of all that is mighty and vast in Nature and

(1) J. Logie Robertson, Introduction and Notes to Thomson's Seasons (Oxford : 1891), notes, pp.414-415.

he was fond of depicting wild scenes- Nature 'red in tooth and claw'. His landscape is composed of huge and unshapely masses of rocks and precipices, cascades, torrents, caves, desolate ruins, thick clusters of trees and dismembered branches. An air of mysterious gloom and melancholy pervades his work. His shadows are lacking in the soothing charm of Claude's. His shadows are big and massive conveying an impression of nervous energy. Claude's delicate chiaroscuro appeals to our sense of beauty : Salvator's handling impresses us with a sense of the Grand and the Sublime. Salvator's canvas heralds that type of modern picturesque and romantic art which associates Beauty with Grandeur and Sublimity.

The beauty of Claude and the grandeur of Salvator contributed to the development of the ideas of the Picturesque in the eighteenth century in every department of Art, especially in landscape-gardening. This topic will be fully discussed in a later chapter ; but it is necessary to note that William Kent, the famous painter-gardener-architect made an assiduous study of Claude and Salvator and tried to reproduce pictures in gardens, until painting and gardening came to be looked upon as twin-forms of picture-making. 'The great principles on which he worked', says Horace Walpole, 'were perspective, light and shadeSelecting favourite objects, and veiling deformities by screens of plantationhe realised the compositions of the greatest masters of painting. (1) Up to the

(1) Horace Walpole, Anecdotes of Painting (Strawberry Hill Press : 1762-71), Vol. IV, Ch. 6, p.138.

mid-eighteenth century there was only the classic type of gardening, but as the century drew to its close the natural manner became the rage. The ideals of Claude and Salvator were silent factors in the disintegration of the classic form of garden and in the evolution of the romantic and picturesque type of gardening.

In our enthusiasm for Claude and Salvator we must not overlook the influence of Dutch painters. English aristocrats of the eighteenth century made collections of Ruysdael, Hobbema and Cuyp and this prepared the way for the early English landscape-painters, Wilson, Gainsborough and Turner. The Dutch painters contributed to the increasing love of Nature towards the middle of the eighteenth century. Rembrandt, Ruysdael and Hobbema- each interpreted Nature in his own way. Rembrandt, the greatest of the three, confined himself to the simplest objects in Nature and depicted their beauty in the simplest way. His simple and concise interpretation of Nature speaks with eloquence. Ruysdael, the next great Dutch artist, also chose simple objects out of which he made telling pictures. His interpretation of picturesque scenery is very exact and penetrating. The country-scenes of Hobbema, the third great Dutch painter, are marked by slight monotony. His famous Avenue, regarded as one of the best Dutch landscapes, does not appear to us so picturesque as the Italian and English landscapes. The difference is due to the climatic conditions of Holland and Italy. Holland is wanting in the delicate and rounded outlines of Italian trees depicted by Claude. Both Claude and Poussin had been inspired by the scenery of the country round Rome,

the Campagna, with its wide plains bordered by hills, its lakes lying in wooded hollows, its majestic remains of Roman monuments, its broken aqueducts and tombs - a serene and ordered landscape. (1) Senator Visconti di Medrone said in his Italian lecture -

'Under the azure skies and in the mellow sun-light of Italy your poets have learned to love Italian art and the people of whose soul it is the expression.' (2)

The classic grounds of Italy which had inspired the genius of these master-painters began to attract Englishmen with whom the Grand Tour became an indispensable part of education in the eighteenth century. They formed ~~the~~ their tastes for pictures and landscape-painting in Italy and collection of pictures became very fashionable. Italian and Dutch painters and paintings began to pour into England. Another important influence of the Italian tour was to impress the travellers with a sense of awe and grandeur at the sight of magnificent Roman ruins. Addison, Dyer and Thomson were all profoundly impressed by such sights. Their Letter from Italy, Ruins of Rome and Liberty contain eloquent ~~eloquent~~ passages of poetic description on the departed glory of Rome. Prof. Trevelyan has touched upon the Italian influence in one of his lectures,

' In the eighteenth century the primacy of things Italian was maintained in men's thoughts through education, art and letters to a much greater extent than today.' (3)

(1) Laurence Binyon, Landscape in English Art and Poetry, 1931, p.64.

(2) 'England and Italy', Annual Italian Lecture, 1932, Proceedings of the British Academy, Vol.XVLLL, p.142.

(3) 'Englishmen and Italians', Pr. of the Br. Acad., 1919-20 p.101

The Grand Tour through the Alpine regions helped to awaken a new taste for mountains which were regarded with disfavour in the seventeenth century.

Dryden looked 'with pain' on craggy rocks and barren mountains. (1) Already towards the close of the seventeenth century, John Dennis, critic and playwright, showed his appreciation of mountain-scenery in his Miscellaneous Verse and Prose (1693). During his journey through the Alps in 1688, he was impressed by the 'careless, irregular and boldest strokes of Nature' which appeared to him 'admirable'. In the following eloquent passage Dennis sums up his impressions -

'The impending Rock that hung over us, the dreadful Depth of the Precipice, and the Torrent that roared at the bottom, gave such a view, as was altogether new and amazing. On the other side of the Torrent was a Mountain ... sometimes gave us a horrid prospect, and sometimes its face appeared smooth and beautiful The sense of all this produced different motives in me, namely, a delightful Horror, a terrible Joy, and at the same time that I was infinitely pleased I trembled.' (2)

This is a clear and succinct expression of the newly-awakened joy for mountains, mingled with the classical idea of horror. Formerly it was unrelieved gloom, not shot through with gleams of brightness : now mountains became a lively source of joy and inspiration to poets and painters.

Horace Walpole and Gray were thrilled by the grandeur of Alpine scenery and their rapturous prose-passages remind us of the paintings of Salvator Rosa. 'Precipices

(1) Dryden, Dedication to the Indian Emperor (1667)

(2) John Dennis, Miscellaneous Verse and Prose (1693), pp.133-134.

mountains, torrents, wolves, rumblings, Salvator Rosa' - so wrote Walpole to West from a hamlet among the mountains of Savoy. The same letter contains a highly picturesque description-

'The road winding round a prodigious mountain, and surrounded with others, all shagged with hanging woods, obscured with pines, or lost in clouds. Below a torrent breaking through cliffs, and tumbling through fragments of rocks. Sheets of cascades forcing their silver speed down channelled precipices, and hasting into the roughened river at the bottom This sounds too bombastic and romantic to one that has not seen it, too cold for one that has.' (1)

Gray's Grand Tour in the company of Horace Walpole produced a deep impression upon his mind and evoked some eminently poetic passages in his prose-letters. In his letter to his mother Gray wrote -

'The immensity of the precipices, the roaring of the river and torrents that run into it, the huge crags covered with ice and snow, and the clouds below you and about you, are objects it is impossible to conceive without seeing them ; and though we had heard many strange descriptions of the scene, none of them at all came up to it.' (2)

The impression of mountain-scenery which Gray received on his way into Piedmont bore fruit in The Progress of Poesy where he recalled scenes

'Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around
Where every shade and hallowed fountain
Murmured deep a solemn sound.' (3)

Gray showed a wide variety of tastes and talents. He fully appreciated all picturesque elements in Nature and Art and as a picturesque tourist he has hardly any rival.

(1) The Letters of Horace Walpole, ed. by Mrs. Paget Toynbee (Oxford :1913-15), Vol.1, p.36 ¶ (Letter dated Sept. 28, 1739)

(2) Correspondence of Thomas Gray, ed. by Toynbee and Whibley (Oxford : 1935), Vol. 1, p.126. (Letter dated Nov.7, 1739)

(3) Gray, The Progress of Poesy, ll.73-76

He recorded his impressions of architecture and painting and his independent judgments on painters are sound. He drew suggestions from a picture of Raphael's in the following lines of The Bard -

'On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the Poet stood.'

This scene closely resembles Salvator's method. It is not improbable that Gray in his Grand Tour had seen Salvator's paintings the indirect influence of which was working in his mind. Gray was fully dominated by the idea of the picturesque, in the light of which he read Shakespeare's plays. 'Every word', says he, 'in Shakespeare is a picture.'⁽¹⁾ His Letters contain his views on Taste. He would go so far as to say that 'the prophetic eye of Taste sees all the beauties that a place is susceptible of, long before they are born.'⁽²⁾ In his letter to Count Algarotti, he pays compliment to the Count for his attempt to're-unite the congenial arts of poetry, music and dance, which with the assistance of painting and architecture, regulated by Tastemight form the noblest scene, and bestow the sublimest pleasure, that the imagination can conceive.'⁽³⁾

Comparing Addison and Gray as grand tourists we find that both drew upon the Latin poets very frequently. In the opinion of Dr. Johnson, Addison was a picturesque

(1) Gray, Works, ed. by Gosse, Vol. 11, p.109

(2) Ibid, p.397

(3) Ibid, Vol.111, p.155.

tourist who surveyed Italy 'with the eye of a poet'. This remark does not apply to the first part of his journey. After crossing the Alps about 1700, he felt relief at the sight of a plain. Nor was he fond of pictures at first. In his Letter from Italy⁽¹⁷⁰³⁾ he characterised painting as 'gay, gilded scenes and shining prospects.' But after he had seen Rome and her picture-galleries he was penetrated with the spirit of a true artist. Now he could appreciate 'broken and interrupted scenes', 'infinite variety of inequalities and shadowings.' On his way back to England he saw the Alps with an eye trained on the picturesque. He could enjoy the beautiful contrast of hills covered by vineyards and pasture. He witnessed beauty in the 'huge precipices of naked rocks ... cleft in some places so as to discover high mountains of snow.'

In the accounts of his travels Addison does not make any illuminating observation on art ; he simply conveys to us the glamour of classic scenes. The ancient world of Rome appeared to him as if clothed in a romantic garb. He thought that the ancients lived 'on fairy ground and conversed in an enchanted region, where everything they looked on appeared Romantic, and gave a thousand pleasing hints to their Imagination.' (1) The 'poetic fields' and 'classic ground' of Italy stirred up his recollections of the classics. He considered the scenery as designed to illustrate his beloved poets. He delights to take Horace as a Guide from Rome to Naples

(1) Addison, Discourse on Ancient and Modern Learning, 1739

and Virgil for a guide on the return-journey. Notwithstanding his predilection for the classics, Addison's best-written poem Letter from Italy contains some luscious descriptions, recalling images from Dr. Chandler's Travels in Greece and in Asia Minor -

'On foreign mountains may the sun refine
The grape's soft juice, and mellow it to wine,
With citron-groves adorn a distant soil,
And the fat olive swell with floods of oil.' (1)

Addison also speaks of 'the reddening orange and the swelling grain', of 'growing oils and wines', of 'loaden vineyards' and of 'Nature's bounty'. Addison's Letter from Italy was a prelude to his elaborate prose Remarks on Several Parts of Italy which he prepared in 1705 from notes made during his tour. His prose Dialogue on the Medals was written during his visit to Vienna in 1702. Of these, his prose-Remarks remind us at many points of Dr. Chandler's accounts of his travels. Both writers were inspired by a spirit of antiquarian research. The countries traversed by Chandler were far more romantic than those seen by Addison. Chandler's accounts are, therefore, an inexhaustible mine of picturesque description. Addison is not so fully descriptive as Chandler ; but his cultured taste and scholarly mind has left an impress of originality upon his remarks on the people and places he saw, and the illustrations of his route from the Latin poets are very happy and graceful. Addison's account will be better relished by a classical scholar, whereas Chandler's Travels will appeal to the general reader.

(1) Addison, Letter from Italy, 11.9-12 131-134

Addison's delight in paintings and landscape finds expression in his poem, where he describes the 'god-like art' of Raphael in the following words-

'Where from the mingled strength of shade and light
A new creation rises to my sight,
Such heavenly figures from his pencil flow,
So warm with life his blended colours glow.' (1)

His poetic picture of the ruins of ancient Rome is well worth quoting-

'When Rome's exalted beauties I descry
Magnificent in piles of ruin lie.
An amphitheatre's amazing height
Here fills my eye with terror and delight.' (2)

This description is lacking in the picturesque touches of Dyer who handled the same theme a generation later in his Ruins of Rome (1740). Addison was too much under the influence of classical scholarship to take a pure and spontaneous delight in Nature and Art. The works of ancient art at Rome did not carry a genuine emotional appeal to him. He delighted in them because they cleared up passages in Juvenal, Ovid, Manilius and Seneca. He preferred the clear, classical spirit to Gothic obscurity. The didactic spirit of the age is present in the poem. He is always eager to point out the moral in the midst of the description. The peasants on the 'savage mountain' are happy, because they are free ; whilst tyranny has converted the rich Campagna of Rome into a wilderness. His fervid address to Liberty (ll.119-126) reminds us of passages in Thomson, Byron and other later poets.

(1) Addison, Letter from Italy, ll.95-98

(2) Ibid, ll. 71-74 (Dyer's description has been discussed in Ch. IV).

We find a really powerful description of landscape in Addison's prose Remarks where he unrolls before our eyes the beautiful prospect near Tivoli -

'It opens on one side into the Roman Campania, where the eye loses itself on a smooth spacious plain. On the other side is a more broken and interrupted scene, made up of an infinite variety of inequalities and shadowings, that naturally arise from an agreeable mixture of hills, groves and vallies. But the most enlivening part of all is the river Teverone, which you see at about a quarter of a mile's distance throwing itself down a precipice, and falling by several cascades from one rock to another, till it gains the bottom of the valley, where the sight of it would be quite lost, did not it sometimes discover itself through the breaks and openings of the woods that grow about it. The Roman painters often work upon this landscape.' (1)

This charming prose-idyll is a purple patch of description, justifying Dr. Johnson's remark that Addison had the poet's eye. Sometimes he could throw out bright gleams of appreciation of scenery. From a consideration of passages like this some critics are inclined to class Addison with the romanticists. (2) His interest in country-scenes, both wild and cultivated, have been taken by others as marking the dawn of the anti-classical movement. But this seems to be too far-fetched. The idea of landscape is classical. Addison was undoubtedly influenced to some extent by the growing ideas of the picturesque and he embodied his own theories on aesthetics in his essays on the Pleasures of the Imagination. In matters of taste, his influence was very great in directing the attention of his countrymen towards naturalism in gardening. But as a literary artist he could not effect an agreeable fusion between poetical description of natural scenery and landscape-painting. The credit

(1) Addison, Remarks on Several Parts of Italy, in Addison's Miscellaneous Works, ed. by A.C. Guthkelch (London: 1914), Vol. II, p. 168.

(2) W.H. Durham, Introduction to The Critical Essays of the XVIIIth Century

of this achievement was reserved for his successors Dyer and Thomson.

The Travels of Addison, of Gray and of Walpole 'announce', in the language of Prof. Oliver Elton, 'the slow unsealing of the poetic senses which was one of the chief spiritual events of the century.' (1) The newly-awakened feeling for Nature which became very pronounced in Thomson's poetry, found expression in memoirs, travels and philosophy. Addison's prose Remarks on Italy are an instance out of many. Bishop Berkeley's Alciphron⁽¹⁷³²⁾ contains some good descriptions of natural scenery.⁽²⁾ The following passage from Berkeley's letter to Pope shows how Berkeley had an eye for the appreciation of picturesque beauty-

'Wonderful variety of hills, vales, rugged rocks, fruitful plains, and barren mountains, all thrown together in a most romantic confusion several fountains and rivulets add to the beauty of the landscape, which is likewise set off by the variety of some barren spots and naked rocks The islands, the Bay of Naples and the whole Campagna Felice, make but a part of the noble landscape, which would demand an imagination, as warm, and numbers as flowing, as your (Pope's) own, to describe it.' (3)

The poet to whom this letter was addressed, one of the stalwart figures of the Augustan age and much decried as anti-romantic, must have quickly responded to Berkeley's sentiments. Pope's feeling for Nature was real and deep. His description of the four seasons in his Pastorals⁽¹⁷⁰⁹⁾ is now doubt tame and jejune by the side of Thomson's vigorous delineation. But in reading his Pastorals we

(1) Prof. Oliver Elton, A Survey of English Literature, (1730-80), London: 1929

(2) Bishop Berkeley, Alciphron or The Minute Philosopher, 1732.

(3) George Berkeley, Works, Ed. A. C. Fraser (Oxf.: 1901), Vol. IV, p. 297.
(Letter dated, Naples, October 22, 1717).

cannot but feel that his feeling for Nature was deep and genuine. The following are detached but pleasing pictures-

'haste to your woodbine bowers,
A soft retreat from sudden vernal showers ;
The turf with rural dainties shall be crowned,
While opening blooms diffuse their sweets around.' (1)

Despite their conventional manner, Pope's Pastorals are full of happy images and verbal felicities in the description of Nature-

'All Nature laughs, the groves are fresh and fair,
The sun's mild lustre warms the vital air.' (2)

The poet sees the 'Dawn blushing on the mountain's side.'
It is the excess of personifications which mars his nature-poetry.

Pope's power in Windsor Forest ⁽¹⁷¹³⁾ is greater.

It is far more polished than the Pastorals. ^{the poem} It belongs to the class of 'local poetry'. It bears traces of the Miltonic influence. The fields are 'crowned with tufted trees' as in the L'Allegro towers and battlements are bosomed high on 'tufted trees.' The design of the poem was derived from Denham's Cooper's Hill, with some attention to Waller's poem on St. James's Park. But, in the language of Dr. Johnson, 'Pope cannot be denied to excel his masters in variety and elegance, and in the art of interchanging description, narrative and morality.' It was during Pope's residence in Windsor Forest that his poetic life began. Miss Sitwell draws our attention to the romantic atmosphere of the place- 'Here he was surrounded by poetry and the rumours of poetry and the far-off echoes of poetry. Never had trees sheltered

(1) Pope, Pastorals, I, ll. 97-100
(2) Ibid, ll. 73-74.

a lovelier nightingale than the shades of this forest.' (1)

Living in the midst of such poetical surroundings, Pope gave expression to his fascination for landscape,

'Oft in her glass the musing shepherd spies
The headlong mountains and the downward skies,
The watery landscape of the pendant woods,
The absent trees that tremble in the floods ;
In the clear azure gleam the flocks are seen,
And floating forests paint the waves with green,
Through the fair scene roll slow the lingering stream
Then foaming pour along, and rush into the Thames.'

(2)

There is another picture in the same poem, reminding us of the manner of Claude-

'Here waving groves a chequered scene display-

There interspers'd in lawns and opening glades,
Thin trees arise that shun each other's shades,
Here in full light in the russet plains extend,
There, wrapped in clouds, the blueish hills ascend.'

(3)

Pope was inspired by the rising ideas of the picturesque and instances may be multiplied from other poems, showing how he was fond of painting landscapes in poetry. The following Claudian scenery meets us in his Temple of Fame-⁽¹⁷¹⁵⁾

'Here sailing ships delight the wondering eyes,
There trees and intermingled temples rise ;
Now a dear sun the smiling scene displays,
The transient landscape now in clouds decays.'

(4)

Pope appreciated Thomson's pictorial description. Pope undoubtedly fretted inwardly at the restraints imposed on him by the temper of the age in which he lived and by the tradition in which he grew up. (5) There is a substratum

(1) Miss Edith Sitwell, Alexander Pope, p.272.

(2) Pope, Windsor Forest, ll.211-218.

(3) Ibid, ll. 17-24

(4) Pope, Temple of Fame, ll. 17-20

(5) Austin Warren, Alexander Pope as Critic and Humanist
(Princeton Studies in English : 1929), p.50

of truth in Prof. Phelps's contention that Pope had suppressed leanings towards romanticism. (1) He had far more emotion, enthusiasm and imagination than he is generally credited with, and he chafed a little under a rigid exclusion of romanticism. Occasionally the lyric vein burst out as in his Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady (11.61-66). Sometimes he found refuge in pictorial description of natural scenery as in the following lines from his Eloisa to Abelard (11.155-162)-

'The darksome pines that o'er yon rocks reclined
Wave high, and murmur to the hollow wind ;
The wandering streams that shine between the hills,
The grotts that echo to the tinkling rills,
The dying gales that pant upon the trees :
The lakes that quiver to the curling breeze ;
No more these scenes my meditation aid,
Or lull to rest the visionary maid.'

The stormy aspect of Nature did not, as a rule, appeal to Pope. Living in his picturesque country-retreat at Twickenham, Pope was a lover of rural beauties. But his poetry is not devoid altogether of Salvatorial touches-

'In prospects thus, some objects please our eyes,
Which out of Nature's common order rise,
The shapeless rock or hanging precipice.' (2)

Pope's friend, Lady Winchelsea had an eye for observing country-scenes and she loved them for their own sake. Her sentimental and meditative poem, Nocturnal Reverie (1713) introduced new images taken directly from rustic life. She was prompted by a natural taste to seek direct inspiration from Nature for the use of poetic imagery. The picture of the waving moon and trembling

(1) W.L.Phelps, The Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement : A Study in XVIIIth century Literature
(Boston : 1893)

(2) Pope, Essay on Criticism, 11. 156-158.

leaves on the river, the sleepy cowslip, the foxglove taking a paler hue at night, but chequering still with red the dusky brakes, the darkened groves with soft shadows, and some ancient fabric peeping out of the gloom in a venerable manner - all remind us of the soothing charm of Claude and Poussin. She was a lover of the cool and delightful shadows of trees. Wordsworth in his famous essay appended to the Lyrical Ballads (1815) in too sweeping a criticism singled out her Nocturnal Reverie along with Pope's Windsor Forest as two of the few poems in the eighteenth century, containing new images of external Nature. If we except Wordsworth's wrong condemnation of eighteenth century poetry as devoid of natural images, his praise of Lady Winchelsea's poem is quite just and fair. By temperament she belonged more to the age of Wordsworth than to her own. Since Wordsworth's commendation she has been enthusiastically admired by Matthew Arnold, Sir Edmund Gosse and others. She has been called ' a wood-lark among town-sparrows', one of the best poets of the reign of Queen Anne. Gosse doubts whether she is the last of the old or the first of the new romantic school. Her tastes were foreign to those of her own age and we hear a distinct romantic accent in her voice. She takes us away from the drawing-rooms as well as from the conventional pastoral atmosphere of her contemporaries. Her images appear to us even more exact than Thomson's, and her style far more natural. But her pictures are still isolated. She could not take a widespread view of landscape. She was trying to

break through the classical conventions by retiring into quiet country-side, seeing Nature with an observant eye, and culling beautiful images from here and there. She introduced some cleaner air from the gardens and glades, freshening the mental climate of the century. This was no doubt a distinct service to the cause of Romanticism. But she could not feel a keen ecstasy in the beauty of external Nature nor take a general view of the whole face of Nature. This close appreciation of Nature began with Dyer, Thomson and others, who will form the subject of our discussion in the next chapter.

In all the Dyes of Nature's Day
And swelling to embrace the light
Spreads around beyond the light.

The early version appeared in 1788 as *An Epitaph on a Highland Hero*, and a revised version in D. Davis's *Miscellaneous Poems*, 1795.
John Dyer's Poems in Chalmers's *English Poets*, 1795.

CHAPTER IV

'PICTURESQUE' POETS.

(II)

John Dyer's Grongar Hill, a kind of descriptive (1) ode describing a journey in South Wales, was published in 1726, the year of Thomson's Winter. This poem, dealing wholly with prospects, shows a decided advance in the appreciation of natural scenery. Even Dr. Johnson who disliked prospects found it 'pleasing... and when once read it would be read again'. This young Welsh poet and landscape-painter had an eye better trained than that of any of his predecessors and he gives preciseness to each object of Nature. Dyer learnt painting under Jonathan Richardson who was passionately fond of Claude and Salvator, as it appears from his Theory of Painting, (1715). Dyer's interest in Claude and Salvator was partly due to Richardson's influence and partly to his Grand Tour to Rome where he completed his art studies. In simple and artless language the poet draws a water-colour sketch of a vast expanse of country bathed in sunshine. After the delightful opening invocation and ascent up the hill, he describes the landscape below, 'the gay open scene', free from clouds and vapour. The face of Nature shows -

'In all the Hues of Heaven's Bow!
And swelling to embrace the Light,
Spreads around beyond the Sight.'

(1) Its early version appeared in 1726 as An Irregular Ode in Miscellaneous Poems, and a revised version appeared in D. Lewis's Miscellaneous Poems: 1726.

Old castles and cliffs proudly tower in the skies, and the spires lifting their heads from the woods seem like ascending fires. The wooded valley, the ruined tower and the shady bower, and the murmur of fountains and river, - all contribute to the picturesqueness of the situation. The colours in the poem are very thin; yet the poet has successfully conveyed the wonderful natural charm of the whole atmosphere. Grongar Hill on the river Towy in Cardigan commands a view noble enough to inspire any poet. It left a deep impression upon the cultivated taste of this painter-poet and his short piece is the choicest production of local poetry. Dyer discarded the artificial and conventional atmosphere of Cooper's Hill, and Windsor Forest. He expressed the thrill which he felt in field and stream in simple language. Grongar Hill has been characterised as the high-water mark of eighteenth century Nature-poetry and as one of the most charming descriptive poems in the English language. (1) Mr. Palgrave finds fault with Dyer for seeing the natural features 'through the glass of his moralising temper' (2) In his didactic spirit Dyer was but the true son of his age. But his moral is so delicately interwoven in the description that it does not mar the effect of beauty. His description of life as 'sunbeam in a winter's day' only serves to establish a close connection between life and nature. Mr. Palgrave further complains that Dyer cannot trust himself to describe Nature for her own sake, like Wordsworth or Shelley. This comparison

(1) Oswald Doughty, Forgotten Lyrics of the XVIIIth Century, (London: 1924), p.157.

(2) F. T. Palgrave, Landscape in Poetry from Homer to Tennyson, London: 1897.

is unfair because the time had not yet arrived for the subtler kind of romantic appreciation. Grongar Hill deserves a rightful place in the history of landscape-poetry, and in the language of Professor Saintsbury, it contains 'some of the first, and almost best, fruits of the romantic spirit and style'. (1)

Dyer's short poem, The Country-Walk, is an inferior replica of Grongar Hill. Here the poet shows his love of country retirement. In his rural pictures of farm-yards and fields we see again the same observing eye. He clothes what he sees with atmosphere. His poetic pictures are carefully-drawn miniatures of Nature, arranged with the taste of an artist.

'What a fair face does Nature show!

--- --- ---
A landscape wide salutes my sight,
Of shady vales and mountains bright,
And azure heavens I behold,
And clouds of silver and of gold,
And now into the fields I go,
Where thousand flaming flowers glow
And every neighbouring hedge I greet,
With honey-suckles smelling sweet.' (2)

These verses breathing warm feeling for Nature must have appeared strange and sweet to the jaded ears of his contemporaries. Gray, with sure taste, recognised Dyer's merit and wrote to Walpole - 'Mr. Dyer has more of poetry in his imagination, than almost any of our number'. (3)

Dyer's grand tour to Italy bore fruit in his Ruins of Rome (1740). It is a descriptive poem in Miltonic

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- (1) Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol.X, Ch.VII, p.146 (Cambridge: 1932).
(2) Dyer, Country Walk, ll.17-26.
(3) Gray's letter to Horace Walpole, 1748 (Correspondence of Gray and Walpole.)

blank verse, bearing many traces of Thomson's influence.

A didactic vein runs through the pictorial description.

The images are drawn from direct observation. The view from the top of the Palatine Hill recalls the days when all the buildings and columns at his feet stood in their glory in the days of Imperial Rome. The following picture of the desolation of Rome, showing the huddle of ruin, is sublime -

'now the rising sun
Flames on the ruins in the purer air
Towering aloft, upon the glittering plain,
Like broken rocks, a vast circumference;
Rent palaces, crushed columns, rifled moles,
Fanes rolled on fanes, and tombs on buried tombs.' (1)

According to Miss Manwaring, the images in The Ruins of Rome were taken by Dyer from Claude's picture Roman Edifice in Ruins. These lines are a good contrast to Addison's description of the ruins of Rome in his Letter from Italy. Dyer's lines show that he had a finer sense of pictorial values than Addison. With his vivid and glowing imagination Dyer captured the spirit of Claude and tried to reproduce it in poetry.

Dyer's Fleece (1757) is a long didactic poem in blank verse on the tending of sheep and preparation of ~~W~~ wool. Akenside assisted him in this poem with some finishing touches. Sir Leslie Stephen found this poem unreadable. The reason for this is that, during the interval between Grongar Hill and The Fleece, Dyer had assimilated the bad elements of the diction of the Seasons. The

(1) Dyer, Ruins of Rome, 11.20-25.

Grongar Hill was written in a pure language - predominantly native and full of quiet ease. Had English poetry developed after the manner of Grongar Hill, after 1726 we would have been spared a great deal of the worst didactic poetry. The universal admiration for Thomson's Seasons is responsible for an age of deplorable didacticism. Even Cowper's Task and Wordsworth's Excursion would have taken a less laboured and more natural turn. Dyer's Fleece is the most conspicuous example of how the folly was working in every vein and struggling with the earlier naturalness of the Grongar Hill. (1)

The poem, however, is not altogether devoid of picturesque description -

'The scattered mists reveal the dusky hills;
Grey dawn appears; the golden morn ascends,
And paints the glittering rocks and purple woods,
And flaming spires.' (2)

Dyer had enthusiasm for his native Welsh scenery, with its fogs and rains, perennial verdure and purling brooks. He is fond of giving us pictures of the yellow sun, purple groves and pale blue distances. Descriptions of land suitable for rearing sheep leads him to pictures of life in Lapland and Arabia. Wordsworth who was a lover of rustic life derived much pleasure from the Fleece. In his sonnet, To the Poet, John Dyer, he says that although fame has treated him with cold neglect, a grateful few will love his modest song -

'Long as the shepherd's bleating flock shall stray
O'er naked Snowden's wide aerial waste;
Long as the thrush shall pipe on Grongar Hill!

(1) Dr. George Kitchin, The Language of Poetry (D.Litt. Thesis: Edin. 1922).

(2) Dyer, Fleece, ll. 44-47.

Tr. to Ch. VII.
Like Dyer, John Philips was a conspicuous fore-runner of Thomson. Philips's Cyder, an imitation of Virgil's Georgics, in Miltonic blank verse, was published in 1706. Thomson, in his Autumn (ll. 645-647) admitted that he borrowed the idea of recording his impressions of Nature from Philips. Cyder had also given some suggestions to Pope in his Windsor Forest. He had a keen eye on natural objects. He does not give us details of the landscape but speaks of the 'hills unamiable' whose tops aspire to Heaven, 'affording sweet prospect'. He did not count the streaks of the tulip. His descriptions are sometimes luscious and full of colour -

'Let every tree in every garden own
The red-streak as supreme, whose pulpous fruit,
With gold irradiate, and vermillion, shines
Tempting, not fatal.'

Philips shared the contemporary enthusiasm for gardens and we know on the authority of Dr. Johnson that Philips's Cyder satisfied a practical expert - 'I was told by Miller, the great gardener and botanist, that there were many books written on the same subject in prose, which do not contain so much truth as this poem'. The life depicted by Philips is one lived under the apple orchards with a romantic and pastoral glamour about it. The intrusion of business-like and scientific elements often mars the effect of beauty. He does not convey any impression of grandeur or sublimity like his successor Thomson. There is just a faint praise of mountains in Blenheim (1705) where (l. 441) he speaks of the 'mountain sublime' casting a shade of immeasurable length.

John Philips, Poems, edited by M.G. Lloyd Thomas, (Oxford:1927).

With Thomson's Seasons, published a few months after Dyer's Grongar Hill, we enter upon a new phase of landscape-poetry. Thomson showed complete concentration on one subject, the world shining in glory or appearing bleak in different seasons. Thomson did not localise the scenery like Dyer. He does not describe one special landscape, but a general scene with mountains, valleys forests and brooks, under different atmospheric conditions, so that his poem consists of a series of pictures. The poet observed minutely the different aspects of the country-side and from his observations prepared a series of canvases in which the successive seasons had been made into living persons as it were. Joseph Warton said that the Seasons were 'very instrumental in diffusing a general taste for the beauties of Nature and landscape.' (1)

Dyer's sun-lit panorama, with its background of purple hills may be contrasted with the solemn beauty of Thomson's mountainous winter landscape, under rain and storm, snow and frost. Thomson paints the solemn, gloomy and awe-inspiring beauty of a mountainous landscape. Dyer also depicts the beauty of hills, but he paints them in the height of summer. Thomson describes the hills more precisely in the rough beauty of winter. In Dyer's scene, we see many bright colours under a cool summer sky, and his picture breathes peace and tranquility. Thomson paints his pictures in black, white and grey, occasionally relieved by a purple gleam. In Dyer's poem, we smell the fragrance of flowers and hear the harmony of singing-birds.

(1) Joseph Warton, Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope (1756).

In Thomson's poetry, we hear the roar of the storm, the noise of water, and see the movement of clouds.

Thomson was a man of fine taste. 'He was passionately fond of music, and he would listen for hours to the nightingales in the garden. His taste was also exquisite in the arts of painting, sculpture and architecture.' (1) With his fellow-traveller, Charles Talbot, a nobleman of exquisite taste, Thomson had undertaken a Grand Tour to the principal cities of Europe, and on his return, his views of external Nature and works of Art were considerably enlarged. He improved his taste upon the best originals which he ~~was~~ saw with his own eyes during his travel. His natural taste for the Grand and the Beautiful was formed. Shaftesbury's aesthetic conceptions, falling upon the fertile field of Thomson's imagination, bore rich fruit. His enjoyment of natural beauty was not a mere pleasure of the senses; he made the beauties of Nature objects of moral grandeur. Like Shaftesbury, he perceived order and harmony in things Beautiful and Sublime. Dr. Johnson paid tribute to Thomson's aesthetic taste - 'His descriptions of extended scenes bring before us the whole magnificence of Nature, whether pleasing or dreadful; the gaiety of Spring, the splendour of Summer, the tranquillity of Autumn, and the horror of Winter, take in their turns, possession of the mind.'

Thomson turned the eyes of men towards Nature as the greatest and grandest of all subjects for poetical

(1) Thomson, Works (edited by Murdoch, Introduction, Vol.I)

treatment. The novelty of his taste is seen in his choice of the bleak and dreary winter season. Pope had already set the fashion to the Seasons as a theme in his Pastorals. Thomson took up the uninviting season first of all, because he had come under the influence of Salvator Rosa, and the following picture is an example of this influence -

\$
'Snows/swell on snows amazing to the sky,
And icy mountains high on mountains piled
Seem to the shivering sailor from afar,
Shapeless and white, an atmosphere of clouds.
Projected huge and horrid o'er the surge
Alps frown on Alps; or rushing hideous down,
As if old chaos was again returned,
Wide rend the deep, and shake the solid pole.'
- Winter, ll. 905-912

Critics have made much of the Claudian influence on Thomson and he has been called the 'Claude of Poets'. (1) The passage just quoted, however, shows Thomson's passionate love of wild and rugged scenery and indicates that he was a disciple of Salvator Rosa too. Nature never threatens in Claude's pictures, as she does in Thomson's or Salvator's. She never suggests any agitation to the mind in Claude's pictures. Claude never painted a tempest nor winter. If he ever depicts the sea, it is cool and clear, and never roughened by storm. The delineation of the destructive forces of Nature which we find in Thomson's Winter is more after the manner of Salvator Rosa. In fact, Thomson took great delight in all aspects of Nature, both grave and gay. In his prose Preface to the second edition of the Winter, he wrote -

(1) Thomas Twining, in his dissertation on Aristotle's Poetics (1785), referring to the Greeks said - 'They had no Thomsons because they had no Claudes', quoted by Miss Manwaring (Op.cit.) in her Preface.

'I know no subject more elevating, more amusing, more ready to awake the poetical enthusiasm, the philosophical reflection, and moral sentiment than the works of Nature. Where can we meet with such variety, such beauty, such magnificence - all that enlarges and transports the soul? There is no thinking of these things without breaking out into poetry.'

Thomson's love of Nature was associated with his love of gardening. The following words contained in his letter to Peterson are significant -

'Retirement and Nature are more and more my passion every day.... I have enlarged my rural domain.... I am such a genuine lover of gardening.' (1)

Thomson was eminently fitted for the task of restoration of Nature to poetry because his natural eye was very keen and observant. Dr. Johnson has paid tribute to his natural eye - 'He looks round on Nature and on life with the eye which Nature bestows on a poet, - the eye that distinguishes in everything presented to its view.' He drew his inspiration direct from Nature, and had the rare gift of description on a broad scale. His wide landscape-views are better than the pictures in miniature, while he is very graphic in his description of the sunshine, of a green wide-stretching field, or of a mountain-scene. Many of his natural descriptions in the Seasons are a veritable picture-gallery, evincing his fine taste and the keen eye of the painter. The following is a typical instance of his broad picture -

'A serener blue,
With golden light enliven'd wide invests
The happy world. Attemper'd suns arise,
Sweet-beamed, and shedding oft through lucid clouds
A pleasing calm; while broad, and brown, below
Extensive harvests hang the heavy head,

(1) Earl Emskine, Essays on the Lives and Writings of Andrew Fletcher and the Poet Thomson (1792)

Rich, silent, deep they stand; for not a gale
 Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain:
 A calm of plenty! till the ruffled air
 Falls from its poise, gives the breeze to blow.
 Rent is the fleecy mantle of the sky;
 The clouds fly different; and the sudden sun
 By fits effulgent gilds the illumined field,
 And black by fits the shadows sweep along.
 A gaily-chequered, heart-expanding view,
 Far as the circling eye can shoot around,
 Unbounded tossing in a flood of corn.'

- Autumn, ll. 26-43.

Like Claude, Thomson was fond of shady groves and twilight-

'Oh! bear me then to vast embowering shades,
 To twilight groves and visionary vales
 To weeping grottoes and prophetic glooms.'

- Autumn, ll. 1030-1032.

The expression 'prophetic gloom' indicates the working of the Salvatorial influence. Thomson had a keen sense of colour and the following lines are a good example of his art as a landscape-painter in the broader sense -

'But see the fading many-coloured woods,
 Shade deepening over shade, the country round
 Imbrown; a crowded umbrage, dusk and dun,
 Of every hue, from wan declining green
 To sooty dark.'

- Autumn, ll. 950-954.

The garden-flowers with their varied hues had an ineffable charm for Thomson. In the Spring (ll. 532-537), he gives a pictorial description of the yellow wall-flower 'stained with iron brown', and of anemones, auriculas and renunculas.

Thomson had a deft hand in drawing sunny pictures and his description of the summer morning is very charming -

'The meek-eyed Morn appears, Mother of Dews,
 At first faint-gleaming in the dappled East;
 Till far o'er Ether spreads the widening glow;
 And from before the lustre of her face,
 White break the clouds away.'

- Summer, ll. 47-51

The poet conceives the morning as opener of 'the lawny Prospect wide', brightening the misty mountain-top.

Thomson was fond of depicting such 'animate scenes'.

Painters might have fitly drawn inspiration from some of the figure-pieces in the Seasons. The harvest-scene in Autumn, the scene of the haymakers in Summer are finely conceived drawings. Thomson's fine taste and accurate eye for painting are seen from endless groupings and descriptions. The Seasons are a great gallery of rural pictures.

There are occasional didactic passages interspersed throughout the Seasons but these have been so happily interwoven that they do not take away from the charm of the natural description. But Thomson could not be as pregnantly suggestive as Shelley who conveyed a whole world of moral truth in ^a single line -

'If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?'

The concluding lines of Thomson's Winter convey a similar idea by spinning out the thread in several lines.

Thomson's other great poem, The Castle of Indolence, (1748), written under the Spenserian influence, is more finely polished than the Seasons. Here also we find the poet's exquisite taste for beautiful landscape. His finely cultivated taste selected all that is best and most perfect in Nature and Life, and, as a result, this poem stands as a piece of finely proportioned Greek sculpture. The Grand Tour had exercised a Hellenic influence upon the genius of Thomson and he had formed a taste for grace and fine proportion. This poem reminds us of the voluptuous

colour and sensuous imagery in Keat's Eve of St. Agnes.

A kind of dreamy langour runs throughout the poem. In its soothing and drowsy effect and in the profuse employment of onomatopoeia, the poem also suggests comparison with Tennyson's Lotus-Eaters. Thomson's ear was delicately sensitive to the voice of Nature and the various sounds of country-life -

'Joined to the prattle of the purling rills
Were heard the lowing herds along the vale,
And flocks loud bleating from the distant hills,
And vacant shepherds piping in the dale;
And now and then sweet Philomel would avail.'

- Castle of Indolence, Canto I, st. iv.

In describing the halls and chambers of the Castle of Indolence, painted with Arcadian scenes, Thomson gives us beautiful landscape pictures -

'Sometimes the pencil, in cool airy halls,
Bade the gay bloom of vernal landscapes rise,
Or Autumn's varied shades imbrown the walls:
Now the black tempest strikes the astonished eyes;
Now down the steep the flashing torrent flies,
The tremble sun now plays o'er ocean blue,
And now rude mountains frown amid the skies.'

- Ibid, st. xxxviii.

The following simple description of the charm of Nature, expressed in exquisitely musical and felicitous language, shows how enthusiastic was Thomson's love of Nature. -

'I came not, Fortune, what you may deny:
You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace;
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which Aurora shows her brightened face,
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
The woods and lawns by living streams at eve.'

- Ibid, Canto II, st. iii.

One is inclined to say with Logie Robertson, 'A love of Nature is synonymous with a love for Thomson'. (1) It was natural for a man fired by such consuming passion for Nature to restore her to the poetic region from which she had been banished by his predecessors. Thomson's simple

(1) J.L. Robertson, Introduction, Thomson's Poetical Works, (Oxford ed.), p.xi.

philosophy of Nature as embodied in the stanza just quoted, shows that he was not over-weighted by any doctrine. The bright face of Nature sent a thrill of pure joy into his heart.

Thomson's third great poem, called Liberty (1) (1735-36), was the fruit of his Grand Tour. He also derived some suggestions from Addison's Letter from Italy. Like Addison, he was inspired by classical associations. On visiting Italy, Thomson wrote - 'I long to see the fields where Virgil gathered his immortal honey'. The first part of the poem called 'Ancient and Modern Italy Compared' is full of commonplace. His original scheme was the presentation of 'a poetical landscape of various countries, mixed with moral observations on their government.' During his tour in Italy, Thomson had acquired his ideas of painting which refined his taste in pictures, and he made a collection of antique drawings and engravings from the old masters. He sets down his ideas of painting in his Liberty, but he does not embellish his poem with first-hand pictures drawn direct from his journey. The following is an example -

'The rugged Apennines that roll
Far thro' Italian bounds their wavy tops.'

'The hollow-winding stream, the vale, fair-spread
Amid an Amphitheatre of Hills.'

In the second part of Liberty, Thomson gives us a poetic account of the origin of painting.

(1) In 1735 appeared Parts I - III (Italy, Greece and Rome), and in 1736 appeared Parts IV - V (Britain and the Prospect).

Thomson has been called a pioneer of the Romantic Movement. He differs, however, from the romantic poets in his calm objectivity. His personal feelings does not colour the natural scene which he paints by intruding upon it. Romantic poets, like Wordsworth and Shelley, do not care so much for the scene as for the emotions which they evoke and they try to establish a harmony between the scene and the emotions.

Thomson's contemporaries were charmed by the Seasons, and the popularity of this poem and its endless imitations prompted Lessing to emphasise, in his Laokoon, the differences between poetic and pictorial art.

Mr. Laurence Binyon thinks that, although Thomson's poetry is occasionally tinged with an emotional glow, it can not compete with the paintings of Claude. He characterises Thomson's descriptions as 'stationary' as compared with the lively qualities of painting. But these limitations arise from the very nature of the two arts. All poetical descriptions must needs be stationary. The poet cannot embody his conceptions so vividly and completely as the painter. He can evoke a succession of images to emphasise and concentrate upon a single idea. The poet flashes these images upon the mind and then withdraws them. Swift movement is the essence of poetic art. Thomson's descriptions are marked by a rapidity of movement.

Thomson's influence was very great upon his contemporaries and his successors. Pope had early appreciated

the genius of Thomson and the Seasons had some influence on the IVth Moral Epistle. Young who was much older than Thomson learnt the Miltonic manner of writing from him. Armstrong, Lyttleton and Glover were deeply read in Thomson and attempted to spread the Thomsonian manner. The versification of Akenside's Pleasures of the Imagination was directly founded upon Thomson's, whose imagination was far more fervid than Akenside's. The latter, like Thomson, was a Scot and he succeeded in painting a wide-extended landscape -

'Who that from Alpine heights his labouring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon to survey
Nile's or Ganges' rolling his bright wave
Through mountains, plains, through empires
--- sand ---
And continents of ~~sear~~, will turn his gaze
To mark the windings of a scanty rill
That murmurs at his feet.'

Christopher Smart, Jago and a host of minors followed the mannerisms of Thomson in their Hop-Garden, Edge-Hill and other topographical and descriptive poems. (1)

The overwhelming influence of Thomson's Seasons provoked Lessing's Laokoon.⁽¹⁷⁶⁶⁾ One of the conclusions come to by Lessing is that in description, the poet should limit himself to one epithet, just as, on the other hand, the painter or sculptor should suggest the moment before and the moment after the situation he selects for his scene or pose. The reason for this is that the poet's medium is time, the sequence of word following word, the painter's is space; but just as the good painter will suggest motion or action,

(1) These poets have been fully discussed in Chapter VIII.

so the good poet may not stay to describe, but may give a mere flying glance at his object and this will be conveyed in one epithet. This will convey a broad touch of description, the essential nature or general appearance of the object. Needless to say, this writes down Lessing as a neo-classic, though an enlightened one. He will have nothing to do with the romantic artist's keen and delaying survey of particulars, - one general epithet must do the work. To give more than a single epithet would be to imitate the plastic arts, and so ruin the conception.

Among the Thomsonian imitators, Edward Young (1683-1765) is one, but his Night⁺Thoughts (1742-45) is devoid of descriptive passages. Young's contribution to Nature-Poetry was very slight. Darkness and the moon, the stars and the sky, - are scattered about the poem, but these have been designed to convey moral reflections.

'How is Night's sable mantle labour'd o'er!
How richly wrought with attributes divine!
What wisdom shines, what love! This midnight pomp,
This gorgeous arch with golden worlds inlaid!
(IV, 385-388)

'Turn up thine eyes, survey this midnight scene
What are Earth's kingdoms to yon boundless orbs.'
(VII, 1244-1245)

'O Majestic Night!
Nature's great ancestor; Day's older-born
And fated to survive the transient sun!
(IX, 551-553)

The greatness of God and the vastness of the Universe strike the poet with awe and admiration. Wild Nature strikes him with a sense of the Sublime, (IX, 11.908-917).

The ennobling influence of mountains and of the ocean, described in these lines, is significant. The grand and the terrible in Nature were coming to exert their spell upon the minds of men. Young refers to the idea of vastness and immensity again and again. He always reads some symbolical meaning in the book of Nature. But in a conventional age, his imageries were bold and original. He explored the heights and depths of the universe for his imageries. He gave rein to imagination in his description of the Night and the Stars. None of his predecessors had painted the Night so vividly, - with her mystery and shadowy grandeur. The supernatural appeal of the Night has been conveyed by the solemn voices breaking her silence, - the howling winds, wailing rivers, shrieking tempests and groaning thunder. Young does not lay hold upon particular features of the Night; he represents the Night in her totality - lifting men's gaze to the entire solar system with its endless constellations and firmament. Although much of Young's poetry is clothed in a didactic garb, the solemn imageries used by him had an air of novelty and grandeur about them. He lifted men's gaze to a sublime atmosphere from the mundane world.

Edward Young was fond of sea-pieces. He wrote Ocean: an Ode, after the manner of Dryden's Odes. The poet compares the wide ocean to a 'prospect wide' and refers to sweet rural scene. Young's strength, however, did not lie in lyric poetry. His Ode often swells into bombast and as often falls into flatness'. (1)

(1) Edward Young, Poetical Works, (Aldine Ed.), by Mitford, p. xxviii.

Young's attitude of revolt against over-nicety finds expression in the prose discourse on Lyric Poetry prefixed to the Ode. In the age of the correct poets, Young had the courage to say that great subjects are above being nice; dignity and spirit ever suffer from scrupulous exactness and that minute cares effeminate a composition. (Aldine^{ed.}, Vol. II, p.153).

Young wrote two other sea-pieces in 1733, through which rings the triumphant note of patriotism.

David Mallet (1705-65), was another disciple of Thomson. In 1757, Mallet had been on a Grand Tour, of which he gives us some pictures -

'There spreads a green expanse of plains...
And there, at utmost stretch of eye,
A mountain fades into the sky;
While winding round, diffused and deep,
A river rounds with sounding sweep.'

Thomson in his letter to Mallet gave him some suggestions on the taste for the Sublime -

'My idea of your poem (Excursion) is a description of the grand works of Nature raised and animated by moral and sublime reflections; therefore, before you quit this earth, you ought to leave no great scene unvisited. Eruptions, earthquakes, the sea, wrought into a horrible tempest, the abyss, amidst whose amazing prospects, how pleasing must they be of a deep valley covered with all the tender profusion of Spring'.

William Shenstone, who more properly comes under the chapter on Landscape-Gardening, was inspired by the poetry of Dyer and Thomson. He had the ideal of the Claudian landscape in his mind and tried to reproduce this ideal in his Leasowes. Claudian influence left innumerable traces on Shenstone's poetry in his constant references to shady groves and nooks, purling streams and antique temples. The following is a typical Claudian picture -

'Twas such a shade, and such a nook,
In such a vale, near such a brook;

From such a rocky fragment springing,
That famed Apollo chose to sing in;
There let an altar wrought with Art
Engage the tuneful patron's heart:
How charming there to muse and marvel,
Beneath his bust of breathing marble.'

- Progress of Taste, Part III, ll. 39-46.

Shenstone's Elegies are full of landscape-pictures -

'Lord of my time, my devious path I bend
Through fringy woodland, or smooth-shaven lawn,
Or pensile grove, or airy clift ascend,
And hail the scene of Nature's pencil drawn.'

- Elegy ~~iii~~, st. 3.

Like Dyer, the poet was charmed at the sight of a sunny,
open prospect -

'How sweetly smiled the hill, the vale,
And all the landscape round!
The river gliding down the vale,
The hill with beeches crown'd.'

Shenstone was a lover of dilettante Arcadianism. In his

Ode on Rural Elegance, he expresses his fervent wish to
repair to -

'Some fair villa's peaceful bound,
To catch soft hints from Nature's tongue,
And bid Arcadia bloom around.'

It is curious that, being himself a votary of pastoralism,

Shenstone ridiculed the pastoral poetry of his ^s time in

Colemira: a Culinary Eclogue (1737). By directing his attack
against this form of poetry, he showed that its time was
well-nigh over.

Among the more important poets of the eighteenth
century who were influenced by Thomson, we may mention
Cowper and Goldsmith. Thomson's style is reflected in the
finer landscapes of Cowper whom we have reserved for dis-
cussion in connection with the taste for landscape-gardening.

We may here take up Goldsmith's Traveller (1764) which was
the fruit of his Grand Tour. In literary genealogy it is
connected with Addison's poetical Letter from Italy and Thomson's

Liberty. Goldsmith's eye for the picturesque enabled him to depict the following scene -

'Far to the right where Apennine ascends,
Bright as the summer, Italy extends;
Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride;
While oft some Temple's mouldering tops between,
With venerable grandeur mark the scene.'

ll. 105-10

Goldsmith speaks of the glowing canvas of Nature. The groves and fields on the continent appeared to him decked in florid beauty. Although his poem is written in the style of Pope, it has the warmth of poetic enthusiasm, and is full of tender touches. Having described the beauties of France and Holland the poet finds consolation in returning to Britain -

'Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
And brighter streams than famed Hydaspes glide:
There all around the gentlest breezes stray,
There gentle music melts on every spray;
Creation's mildest charms are there combined.'

ll. 318.

Goldsmith expressed his love for peaceful domesticity both here and in his Deserted Village. This note of domestic happiness is more pronounced in Cowper. Both were genuine lovers of the country and mourned the deterioration of villages. Goldsmith's love of Lawns finds expression in his Deserted Village -

'Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose'.
'Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn.'

References to lawns are very frequent in eighteenth century Nature-poetry. Gray went 'to meet the sun upon the upland lawn', and wrote in his Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College -

'Of Windsor's heights the expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey.'

Dyer wrote -

'Gaudy as the opening dawn
Lies a long and level lawn.'

Smart described -

'Beauteous the moon fall on the lawn.'

In Whitehead we read -

'beside a greenwood shade
Which clothed a lawn's aspiring head.'

The influence of Goldsmith's Traveller is seen in Wordsworth's Descriptive Sketches which he published in 1793 on his return to England after the continental tour. This poem is a record of the impressions of landscapes which he saw in France and Switzerland. It is a continuation of the hill-poetry of the eighteenth century, but showing a more minute and detailed observation of Nature. Like Dyer, Thomson and other 'picturesque' poets, Wordsworth felt a thrill of joy at the sight of the 'blessed, delicious scene'. His eye greeted the open beauties of the landscape. He did not penetrate into Nature's deep mysteries, but experienced a spontaneous rapture in the midst of picturesque surroundings. The Poet's later mood of impassioned meditateness is foreshadowed in his love of 'lone retreats' and 'dim religious groves'.

The poem is a compound of Claudian and Salvatorian elements. The soothing charm of Claude's canvas has been reproduced by Wordsworth in the following lines -

'a softer prospect opes,
Calm huts, and lawns between, and sylvan slopes.
While mists, suspended on the expiring gale,
Moveless o'erhang the deep secluded vale,
The beams of evening, slipping soft between,
Light up of tranquil joy a sober scene;
Winding its dark-green wood and emerald glade,
The still vale lengthens underneath the shade.'

Wordsworth's mind was thus early attuned to the soft repose and calm of Nature. The 'glad animal movements', the boyish exuberance of spirit, which we find in his Tintern Abbey are absent. Here we have only the pleasures 'of the eye and ear'. He paints a perfect picture of peace and harmony -

'Nature, ever just, to him imparts
Joys only given to uncorrupted hearts.'

Wordsworth's youthful soul is wafted along 'soft gales and dews of life's delicious morn'. He sees the 'purpled hills' illuminated by smiling lights. In every babbling brook he finds a friend. The 'reflection of the rich golden verdure' on the waves strikes his eye. He shows keen sensitiveness to colour in depicting the placid atmosphere round about the lake -

'-Thy lake, 'mid smoking woods, that blue and gray
Gleams, streaks or dappled, hid from morning's ray
Slow travelling down the western hills, to fold
Its green-tinged margin in a blaze of gold.'

The man who delights in fine shades of colouring is an exquisitely sensitive being and is possessed of good taste. The open vale with murmuring streams and 'hills of downy green', the chestnut groves, the wooded glens, the smiling green and the antique castles, - have all been conceived in the manner of the landscape-painter. The sunny and bright prospect of Nature, which greeted his eye during his continental tour, left a deep impression upon his mind and he tried to paint them in words. The gardens and orchards of the eighteenth century inspired some of his verses -

'A garden-plot the desert air perfumes,
Mid the dark pines a little orchard blooms.'

side by side with scenes of peaceful repose, Wordsworth felt the thrill of hills and seas -

'Mid savage rocks, and seas of snow that shine
Between interminable tracts of pine,
A temple stands; which holds an awful shrine.'

This is after the manner of Poussin whose pictures reveal thick-shaded trees, with temples and statues, and with the background of rocks behind them. The beauty and sublimity of the Alpine scenery have been sketched in strong outlines -

'Eastward, in long perspective glittering, shine
The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake recline;
Wide o'er the Alps a hundred streams unfold,
At once to pillars turned that flame with gold.'

Mountains appeared to Wordsworth 'glowing hot, like coals of fire.' His heart is roused to severe delight at the sight of the dangerous steep, the black drizzling crags. Standing in the midst of these awe-inspiring surroundings, the youthful poet was seized by a meditative mood and recognised the presence of some Supreme Power -

'And sure there is a secret Power that reigns
Here.'

This contemplative mood is only a passing phase, and it is broken by -

'the melancholy sound
Of drowsy bells, for ever tinkling round.'

The poet's musical ear was keenly alive to the sounds of village life; - the lowing of the heifer, the whisper of the vernal breeze, the distant rumbling of the falling snow, and the boy shouting with savage joy, - all carried sweet sensations to the peace-loving poet's ear. Wordsworth had not yet got rid of the stock-phrases of eighteenth century nature-poetry. His 'lowing herds' reminds us of Gray. His 'emerald isles', 'fragrant scents', 'velvet green', 'delicious morn' and 'the thundering tube' remind us of similar

conventional epithets, very common in the minor poets of the age. His personification of 'Content', 'Hope' and a host of other abstract things are traces of the Augustan Age, but, on the whole, Wordsworth's early style in this and ^{its} companion piece, An Evening Walk, foreshadows the chastened purity and elegance of his later style. It is not the language of the rustic folk which is the vesture of his thoughts in this poem. He was not yet encumbered by his fanciful theories of poetic diction. The style of these pieces is exactly suited to the picturesque elements which they are meant to convey. It is different from the stilted phraseology of Thomson, - and it is equally removed from the rustic simplicity which Wordsworth so much advocated in theory but followed so little in practice. The diction present in the descriptive poetry of the eighteenth century cannot be condemned. This element must always be present in poetry, except among poets of Browning's or Walt Whitman's individualistic stamp. The natural man, when confronted with a scene or situation which arouses his dormant poetical emotions, as a matter of fact uses the artificial strain of language though he is ordinarily a little ashamed of it. Generalised and stock phraseology is easier than particularised language. The ordinary tourist, when brought face to face with some great piece of Nature's work, draws upon this strain of language. The eighteenth century was using the language which ordinary men as a matter of fact do use when in a state of poetical excitement. It is only the cultured artist who can find the particular and adequate word for such occasions. The ordinary man uses the time-^{battered}~~leathered~~ speech-tokens which we call poetic diction. Viewed in this light, Wordsworth's premises in his Lyrical Ballads (Preface

and Postscript) are not true. Wordsworth was following a more natural method in these two earlier poems.

The style of these poems approximates more to that of Cowper - whose influence is uppermost in early poetry of Wordsworth. Neat little pictures of country-life, with the cool air of domesticity blowing over it, abound in the poem. We catch an accent of the Task in the following lines -

'Through Nature's vale his homely pleasures glide
Unstained by envy, discontent and pride
The bound of all his vanity to deck
With one bright bell, a favourite heifer's neck;
Content upon some simple annual feast
Remembered half the year and hoped the rest
If dairy produce from his inner hoard
Of thrice ten summers consecrate the board.'

It was from his early age that Wordsworth acquired the habit of observing all the simple facts of village-life. Like Cowper, he regarded the sights and scents and sounds of the country as a source of ineffable pleasure. The Thomsonian influence was also working upon Wordsworth in his attempts to describe the Seasons, especially Winter, to which there are many references in this short poem -

'Winter, calling all his terrors round,
Rush down the living rocks with whirlwind sound.'

'Nor Winter yet his frozen stores had piled,
Usurping where the fairest herbage smiled.'

'Exulting mid the Winter of the skies.'

'A bough of Winter's bleakest pine.'

'When downward to his Winter hut he goes.'

There are also references to 'Autumn's Latest spray' and 'Summer's ray'. The eighteenth century vein of pastoralism is not absent -

'While pastoral pipes and streams the landscape lull
And bells of passing mules that tinkle dull.'

The whole poem is a happy blend of the various strands of taste which it is our aim to discuss here.

In his Evening Walk the poet achieved happier results in bringing forward the elements of the picturesque-

'How pleasant, as the yellowing sun declines,
And with long rays and shades the landscape shines ;
To mark the birches' stems all golden light,
That lit the dark slant woods with silvery white ;
The willow's weeping trees, that twinkling hoar,
Glanced oft upturned along the breezy shore
Low bending o'er the coloured water, fold
Their moveless boughs and leaves like threads of gold
The skiffs with naked masts at anchor laid,
Before the boat-house peeping through the shade ;
The unwearied glance of woodman's echoed stroke ;
And curling from the trees the cottage smoke.'

The pictorial elements are very prominent in this description. It calls to mind many a canvas of the landscape-painters. The lines are a wonderful poetical painting of sun-rise-

'Hung o'er a cloud above the steep that rears
Its edge all flame, the broadening sun appears
A long blue bar its aegis orb divides,
And breaks the spreading of its golden tides ;
And now it touches on the purple steep
That flings his shadow on the pictured deep.
Cross the calm lake's blue shades the cliffs aspire
With towers and woods, "a prospect all on fire"
The coves and secret hollows, through a ray
Of fainter gold, a purple gleam betray,
The gilded turf arrayed in richer green
Each speck of lawn the broken rocks between
Deep yellow beams the scattered boles illumine
Far in the level forest's central gloom.'

The poet has carefully noted the varied tints of natural phenomena. The expression 'pictured deep' accentuates the fact that Wordsworth viewed the scene with the eye of a painter. Such minute observation of the changing aspects of Nature is not to be found in the landscape-poets who had written before him. Wordsworth remembered minutely the scenes which stamped themselves upon his mind. His descriptions are like the 'animate scenes' of Thomson : but Wordsworth's scenes are far more poetic and we feel

the quivering pulse of life in his descriptions of the varied effects of light-

'But now the clear bright Moon her zenith gains,
And, rimy without speck, extend the plains :
The deepest cleft the mountain's front displays
Scarce hides a shadow from her searching rays ;
From the dark-blue faint silvery threads divide
The hills, while gleams below the azure tide;
The scene is wakened.'

Like Claude, he observed the subtle interchanges of light and shade -

'When in the south, the wan noon, brooding still,
Breathed a pale stream around the glaring hill,
And shades of deep-embattled clouds are seen,
Spotting the northern cliffs with lights between ;
Gazing the tempting shades to them denied.'

Many poets before Wordsworth had seen Nature through the Claude-glass but none succeeded in a thorough imaginative grasp of her details. At times, Wordsworth took a broad view of the whole landscape,

'Even here, amid the sweep of endless woods,
Blue pomp/ of lakes, high cliffs, and falling floods,
Not undelightful are the simplest charms,
Found by the grassy door of mountain-farms.'

Hitherto the 'picturesque' poets had been content only with the observation of the outward face of Nature. They did not penetrate into the silent mysterious forces underlying her. Wordsworth noted the effect of such forces on the imagination in describing the fading lights of evening-

'Now with religious awe, the farewell light
Blends with the solemn colouring of night;
'Mid groves of clouds that crest the mountain's brow,
And round the west's proud lodge their shadows throw
Like Una shining on her gloomy way
The half-seen form of twilight roams astray
Now o'er the soothed accordant heart we feel
A sympathetic twilight slowly steal,
And ever, as we fondly muse, we find
The soft gloom deepening on the tranquil mind.'

The 'pensive sadly pleasing visions' are slowly fading away, and there is a note of tender melancholy in the poet's address to them to stay-

'Stay ! pensive sadly-pleasing visions, stay !
 Ah no ! as fades the vale, they fade away :
 Yet still the tender, vacant gloom remains,
 Still the cold cheek its shuddering tear retains.'

Wordsworth uses the words 'golden' and 'silvery' so often in his descriptions of landscape that they fall upon our ears-

'Tipped with gold the mountain summits glowed'
 Boughs and leaves appear to him like 'threads of gold'.
 It is the golden light that lits up the woods. The babbling brooks are all 'liquid gold'. The tide is golden and the turf is gilded. The cloud is robed in gold. The 'silvered' waters are glowing, and the threads of ray are 'silvery'.

From our study of the 'picturesque' poets we find that each of them contributed in his own way to the development of the ideas of the picturesque. The Grand Tour played an important part in supplying the poets with fresh images of external Nature for the composition of their travel-poems. But they derived real inspiration from the beauty of the British country-side. Dyer's Welsh landscapes, Thomson's pictures imbued with the spirit of Scotland's romantic scenery, and Wordsworth's delineation of the beauty of the Lake Districts are superior to their description of the foreign countries. The Grand Tour, however, had a supremely educative value

in extending the range of vision of these islanders. The knowledge which the poets gained from their study of the landscape-paintings in continental picture-galleries added fresh stimulus to their genius for pictorial description. A close affinity existed between painting and poetry : just as Poussin and Claude were aiming at imputing to their landscape-paintings a poetic sensibility, so the poets were trying to use the painter's brush in their descriptions. Landscape-painting and landscape-poetry are both species of romantic art, and these two are typical of the English tradition. The eighteenth century love of landscape had its influence on Constable, Turner, Corot and other English landscapists of the nineteenth century. To understand Nature, nature-poets and landscape-painters followed the example of Claude and walked in the field with a humble mind and studied her with seriousness and application. Constable came, like Wordsworth after Thomson, to restore realism and naturalism to painting. Turner embraced every variety of previous landscape-painting. By the time Wordsworth wrote his Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches , English poetry had got rid of 'derivative and eclectic mannerisms'. It relied upon an intuitive grasp of natural beauty and represented the spirit of the English landscape with keenness and intensity.

CHAPTER V

GOTHIC AND CHINESE TASTES IN THE XVIIIth CENTURY

Side by side with the 'Grecian gusto' there existed a 'Gothic delirium' in the eighteenth century. The newly awakened taste for Gothic architecture gave an impetus to the Romantic Movement in literature. Tired of the classical ideal men began to turn to the Middle Ages as a source of relief. Unable to bear the tyranny of neo-classic canons, they found a safety-valve in the Gothic revolt.

The Gothic ideal was not popular in the early part of the century. Bishop Berkeley writing in 1732 in his New Alciphron (iii.8) ^{drew} draws a distinction between Grecian and Gothic architecture, and regarded the latter as fantastical, and 'neither founded in Nature nor in reason, in necessity nor in use, the appearance of which accounts for all the beauty, grace and ornament of the other.' We have noted in the first chapter how Shaftesbury and Addison disliked the Gothic ideal. This unfavourable attitude gradually changed as the century advanced. Sir Joshua Reynolds in his Discourse, the XIIIth, delivered to the students of the Royal Academy in 1786, pointed out that 'the principles of the Gothic Architecture which, though not so ancient as the Grecian, is more so to our imagination, with which the artist is more concerned than with absolute truth.' (1)

(1) Sir Joshua Reynolds, Works containing his Discourses, Idlers and his Commentary on Du Fresnoy's Art of Painting, edited by Edmund Malone (London : 1801), Vol. II, p. 138.

The Gothic style of architecture was opposed to the symmetrical principles of the classical style. There was much more variety and novelty in the pointed arches, traceried windows, flying buttresses and panel vaulting of Gothic art. It was not over-ridden by any rigid classical formula and it could adapt itself to any novel conditions. It could be plain or rich, simple or ornate, retaining all the time, the individuality of its style. The many-sided appeal of Gothic art stood in marked contrast to the simple monotony of the classical style. The novelty, variety and versatility of the Gothic were quite in keeping with the restless temper of the Middle Ages. In the latter half of the eighteenth century the spirit of man had come to be unquiet and restive. This spirit of unrest found exactly what it wanted in the Gothic Revival. The new-born romantic tendency drew part of its inspiration from the Gothic fountain.

Gothic architecture is marked by romantic symbolism. The Gothic cathedral with its dim interior, its cloistered seclusion, its upward-pointing spires expressed in concrete form the ideals and aspirations of Christian spiritual life which secludes itself from the contamination of the outward world. The forests of spires and points rising one above the other, the tapering arches and windows, the vast height of the buildings, represent the upward aspirations of the soul which has withdrawn from the material world into the inner world of the spirit. One of the prominent features of romantic art is the withdrawal of the soul from the sensual world into the

subjectivity of its inner soul-life. The Greek temple with its walks and colonnades is open to the world. It invites ingress and egress. It is flat, low and wide - not narrow and high like the Gothic Church. The flatness and horizontal extension of Grecian architecture stretches the mind outwards into the external world. Its magnificent pillars stand outside : in the Gothic church the pillars are inside. Every feature of Gothic art representing the infinity of the spirit and of its aspirations had its message to the new romantic generation.

In the history of Gothic taste the name of Horace Walpole stands out. A mixture of classical and romantic elements is found in his life and writings. Although he was a lover of the Grecian temple, 'in the heretical corner of his heart' he 'adored the Gothic building'. (1) He bought Strawberry Hill in 1747 and began to Gothicismise it in 1750, until it was completed in 1753. He introduced rococo, sham ruins and all pretty absurdities after the Gothic manner for producing delightful surprise. Horace Walpole was influenced by contemporary taste and Strawberry Hill stands as the chief example of that taste. Although it could not produce strict architectural accuracy yet it was a sure indication of a notable change in the history of taste.

From 1747 Strawberry Hill became the centre of his literary and artistic activities. Here Gray was a frequent guest. In 1757, Walpole erected a private printing-press at Strawberry Hill, the first-fruits of which were Gray's two Odes The Progress of Poesy and the Bard. In

(1) Horace Walpole, Letters, ed. by Mrs. Paget Toynbee (Oxford : 1913-15), Vol. III, p.181.

1758, Walpole printed his own Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, and in 1762, the first two volumes of his Anecdotes of Painting. Strawberry Hill became so famous as to attract innumerable visitors. It had far more potent influence than books in educating public taste. Horace Walpole sitting in his Gothic garden appears to us a romantic figure. 'The pseudo-mediaeval-castle-convent Strawberry Hill was the creation and refuge of the hidden romantic dreamer within himself.' (1) He was romantic to the core by reason of his bold originality and courageous revolt against prevailing canons.

Horace Walpole tried to give a stimulus to the Gothic taste by his incessant praise of it in all his works. In his Anecdotes of Painting he gives a detailed account of the Gothic in his chapter on the mediaeval architects. In discussing the relative merits of classical and Gothic architecture he says that 'the noblest Grecian temple cannot convey half so many impression to the mind as a Cathedral does of the best Gothic taste.' He found 'sensations of romantic devotion' in the Gothic architects. Gothic appeared to him charged with passion -

'One must have taste to be sensible of the beauties of Grecian architecture ; one only wants passions to feel Gothic.'

Horace Walpole did his best to show that the Gothic artists were not inspired by blind caprice, but they had 'more knowledge of their art, more taste, more genius, and more propriety than we choose to imagine.'

Horace Walpole's Letters, which are marked by the romantic strain in his temperament, are rich in passages embodying his warm and enthusiastic admiration for the Gothic. It was largely due to his influence that

(1) Oswald Doughty, Introduction to The Castle of Otranto
(Scholartis Press : London : 1929)

the word 'Gothic' ceased to be disparaging. He was so fond of this word that we stumble upon it at every step in his Letters. Expressions like 'a pretty Gothic bridge' (1) 'neat, little Gothic house', (2) 'charming, venerable Gothic scene', (3) 'Gothic stair-case so pretty', (4) 'the house has no grace, no ornament, no Gothic in it' (5) - are strewn like April flowers in his Letters. He even refers to 'Gothic hospitality' (6) and 'Gothic passion' (7) Sometimes he contrasts 'the grace of Grecian architecture with the irregular lightness and solemnity of the Gothic' (8) Describing the 'Gothic beauties and taste' of St. George's Chapel, he said that 'the Grecian style could not admit half the variety of its imagination.' (9) He even believed in the sobering influence of the Gothic-

'Mr. Nicholls is returned transported with Italy. I hope, he will come hither with me next week. Gothic ground (of Strawberry Hill) may sober him a little from pictures and statues.' (10)

Walpole speaks of his own Strawberry Hill in rapturous accents in some romantic passages of his Letters -

'Strawberry is in the most perfect beauty, the verdure exquisite, and the shades venerably extended. I have made a Gothic gateway to the garden, the piers of which are of stone and very respectable. The round tower is finished, and magnificent.....the little villa is grown into a superb castle.' (11)

Walpole's correspondence contains corrections of some mistakes made by Addison in his Remarks on Several Parts of Italy -

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- (1) Horace Walpole, Letters, ed. by Mrs. Paget Toynbee (Oxford :1913-15), Vol. III, p. 111
 (2) Ibid, III, 113. (6) Ibid, III, 120.
 (3) Ibid, III, 185. (7) Ibid, III, 163.
 (4) Ibid, III, 146. (8) Ibid, IV, 212.
 (5) Ibid, IV, 426 (9) Ibid, XV, 77

(10) Ibid, VIII, 260. (11) Ibid, VIII, 36.

'You must not believe Mr. Addison about the wonderful Gothic nicety of the dome ...Mr. Addison travelled through the poets, and not through Italy ; for all his ideas are borrowed from the descriptions, and not from the reality. He saw places as they were, not as they are.' (1)

Walpole's criticism of Addison is appropriate. Walpole's correspondence contains not only innumerable references to the Gothic but it gives us powerful descriptions of landscape. The following is a romantic description of the landscape of Strawberry Hill-

'A violent shower in the morning laid the dust, brightened the green, refreshed the roses, pinks, orange-flowers, and the blossoms with which the acacias are crowned. A rich storm of thunder and lightning gave a dignity of colouring to the heavens ; and the sun appeared enough to illuminate the landscape.' (2)

Mr. Oswald Doughty has pointed out that Walpole's soul was in revolt against the rationalism of his time and he poured out the hidded romanticism of his soul in his letter to Madame du Deffand -

' J'ai laissé courir mon imagination ; les visions et les passions m'échauffaient. Je l'ai fait en dépit de règles, des critiques et des philosophes ; et il me semble qu'il n'en vaille que mieux.' (3)

Although critics have characterised Horace Walpole as a virtuoso, ' a dilettante author and dandy artist', yet his want of massive learning like Gray's or Warton's is compensated for by vivacious and lively wit and a charming style which enlighten and give a savour to his letters. Austin Dobson calls Walpole 'the most picturesque of picturesque chroniclers', and he refers to the incomparable letters as the social chronicle of a specially picturesque epoch. (5)

(1) Horace Walpole, Letters (op. cit.), Vol.I, pp.53, 87-88

(2) Ibid , Vol. VI, p.85.

(3) Oswald Doughty, Introduction to The Castle of Otranto

(4) H.A.Beers, A History of English Romanticism in the XVIIIth Century (New York : 1910), p. 229.

(5) Austin Dobson, Horace Walpole : A Memoir, 4th ed. revised by Dr. Paget Toynbee (Oxford : 1927)

Lord Byron in his Preface to Marino Faliero (1820) eulogised Horace Walpole- ' It is the fashion to under-rate Horace Walpole, firstly, because he was a nobleman, and secondly, because he was a gentleman ... He is the father of the first romance ...and surely worthy of a higher place than any living writer.'

Walpole carried his dilettantism in the field of romance. In 1765 he wrote his Castle of Otranto : A Gothic Story. As realisation of his romantic dream it is the literary counterpart of his Strawberry Hill . In writing this novel he was inspired by his early memories of Grand Tour with Gray. He had seen splendid Gothic Cathedrals with their gloomy chapels, dark passages and spacious interior. He made full use of these recollections in his novel. Sir Walter Scott who regarded Walpole as 'a man of great genius' was rapturous in his admiration of this work as 'remarkable, not only for the wild interest of the story, but as the first modern attempt to found a tale of amazing fiction upon the basis of the ancient romances of chivalry.'⁽¹⁾ The story is full of supernatural shudders and Gray in his letter to Walpole summed up the reader's feeling →

'The Castle of Otranto makes some of us cry a little, and all in general afraid to go to bed o'night.'⁽²⁾ The Gothic setting of the story with frowning castles and gloomy monasteries, knights in armour and ladies in distress, and monks, nuns, hermits - all take us back to the Middle Ages. It is true, as critics have said, that this novel is not a historical romance and that it does not bring out

(1) Sir Walter Scott, Lives of the Novelists, (World's Classics : Oxford)p.177

(2) Gray, Works, ed. by Edmund Gosse, Vol.III, p.191.

the true spirit of the Middle Ages. Nevertheless it exercised tremendous influence on contemporary novel and it was followed by a host of imitators . Notable of these imitations are Clara Reeve's Old English Baron (1778), Matthew Lewis's Monk and Mrs. Radcliffe's Mysteries of Udolpho (1794). Even Scott's Ivanhoe bears some traces of its influence. It may be regarded as the fountain of two streams of romance - the novel of sentiment and the novel of terror. Walpole's novel shows signs of the coming romantic revival, containing much of its inmost spirit.

The greater fame of Horace Walpole in the history of Gothic taste ~~has~~ overshadowed ~~by~~ the scholarly and antiquarian achievements of his friend Gray in this direction. Walpole was never an antiquary or pedant. He had the typical, aristocratic, eighteenth century contempt for pedants and pedantry. In the composition of his 'learned' works Walpole was largely indebted for advice and assistance to Gray, who not only made copious extracts for him from manuscripts and early printed books in the Cambridge libraries and at the British Museum, but also supplied him with many of his notes, and with valuable original matter. Gray corrected Walpole's account of the Gothic in Anecdotes of Painting. Gray was consulted by the Strawberry Hill Committee and was asked to select Gothic wall-papers to which there are several references in his letters. The poet found in Strawberry Hill ' a purity and propriety in Gothicism not seen elsewhere.' Gray, Walpole and Mason sat together in the fragrant quiet of the garden. Gray himself lived in a Gothic apartment, as it appears from his letter to Palgrave-

'You would not fail to send me some furniture for my Gothic apartment.' (1)

Gray traces the origin of Gothic architecture and points out the characteristics of the good Gothic style-

'In the reign of Henry III it was that the beauty of Gothic architecture began to appearThen all at once came in the tall piqued arches, the light clustered columns, the capital of curling foliage, the fretted tabernacles and vaultings, and a profusion of statues etc. that constitute the good Gothic style.' (2)

Gray admired the Siena Cathedral as 'laboured with a Gothic niceness and delicacy in the old-fashioned way'. (3)

Gray's romantic spirit rose in revolt against any kind of set formula in Gothic and he advocated variety and novelty -

'It is mere pedantry in Gothicism to stick to nothing but Altars and Tombs, and there is no end of it, it we were to sit upon nothing but Coronation Chairs, nor drink out of nothing but chalices and flagons.' (4)

In his Journal of the Lakes , Gray describes 'a magnificent Gothic gateway.' The Gothic gloom of the stained-glass window cast its fascination upon him and he describes it in one of his letters -

'I have been more used to see the whole top of coloured glass, the gloom above contributing much to the beauty of the clear view below. The first is more Gothic and more uncommon, the latter more uncommon and more cheerful.' (5)

Gray's Elegy is remarkable for its Gothic setting with 'solemn stillness', 'ivy-mantled-tower', the moping owl complaining to the moon, and the rugged elms and yew-trees. Sir Edmund Gosse finds a Gothic picturesqueness in

(1) Gray, Works, ed. by Gosse, Vol.II, p.380.

(2) Ibid, Vol. III, p. 146.

(3) Ibid, Vol. II, p.64 (also in Gray's Letters ed. by Tovey Vol. I, p.30.)

(4) Gray, Works , Gosse, Vol. III, p.120.

(5) Ibid, Vol. III, p.17.

Gray's Descent of Odin.

While Gray and Walpole were actively engaged in popularising the Gothic taste, Bishop Hurd gave a new impetus to romanticism with his famous Letters on Chivalry and Romance (1762) which is a triumphant vindication of Gothic literature from the imputation of barbarism. The book opens with the following striking words -

'The ages we call barbarous, present us with many a subject of curious speculation.'

This was ~~Y~~ altogether a novel point of view to the critics of the eighteenth century. Addison had denounced the Gothic taste as barbarous and monstrous in his essays of the Spectator (Nos . 62, 63 and 409). The mystery and romance of the Middle Ages did not carry any message to the essentially prosaic mind of Addison who was fond of moving within the classical groove. Hurd broke away so completely from the classical restraint that he not only claimed a place for Gothic Art, but actually suggested that Gothic manners were superior to to classical as subject for poetry. Neither Gray nor Walpole would have ventured to contrast 'the uncontrolled barbarity of the Grecian' with the 'dignity, magnificence and variety of feudal times.' Hurd takes us back into the heart of the true Middle Ages. His Letters are twelve in number. In the first Letter he shows how the spirit of romance and Gothic chivalry were always a light to politer ages. 'The greatest geniuses', says he, 'of our own and foreign countrieswere charmed by the Gothic romances.' In his Letter, the IVth, he brings out points of similarity between the manners of the classical times and those of the

mediaeval/age . From this similarity he concludes in Letter VI that 'the pictures of both are equally entertaining.' He points out Gothic language and ideas in Milton's Paradise Regained in such expressions as 'infernal ghosts', 'hellish fires' and 'grisly spectres'. He concludes the VIth Letter with a triumphant paean of praise in honour of the Gothic -

'We are upon enchanted ground The fancies of our modern bards are not only more gallant, but more sublime, more terrible, more alarming, than those of the classical fablers. The manners they paint, and the superstitions they adopt are the more poetical for being Gothic.'

In Letter VII, Hurd appears as the precursor of Coleridge in his enunciation of the theory that a poem is to be judged not by current standards, but according to the ideal which the poet had set before him -

'When an architect examines a Gothic structure by Grecian rules, he finds nothing but deformity. But the Gothic architecture has its own rules, by which, when it comes to be examined, it is seen to have its merit.'

Hurd's theory is an enlargement of the bounds of literary criticism. In Letter VII, Spenser and Milton, both appear 'rapt with Gothic fables of chivalry'. Spenser's theme is Gothic and his Faery Queene should be read as a Gothic poem. Shakespeare is also great when he uses Gothic manners and machinery. In Letter XII, Hurd shows the preponderance of classical taste in the eighteenth century and the rejection of the Gothic. Reason finally gained the ascendancy 'over the portentous spectres of the imagination'. Hurd was trying to make up for the loss which the arts had sustained by the dying out of the Gothic taste. His Letters by taking men to the Middle Ages gave a new lease of life to literature, by refreshing it with vivid images, and providing it with

new enthusiasms. Bishop Hurd found a feeble imitator in Miss Reeve who in her Progress of Romance follows closely the lines of the Letters.

In carrying on the Gothic tradition the brothers Warton were far more active than either Walpole or Hurd. Historically the Wartons come before Hurd because the first edition of Thomas Warton's Observations on the Faerie Queene of Spenser was published in 1754. A striking similarity in the line of arguments taken by both these authors shows that Hurd was influenced by Warton. The latter was charmed by the spell of Spenser's romance - 'In reading Spenser, if the critic is not satisfied, the reader is transported.' Warton strikes a note of dissent against contemporary taste -

'A poetry succeeded in which imagination gave way to correctness, sublimity of description to delicacy of sentiment, and majestic imagery to conceit and epigram.'

The Wartons and Hurd were the leaders of revolt in 'the new school of taste' and they clearly demonstrated the importance of imagination in poetry.

The Warton brothers were the true pioneers of the mediaeval revival. Both had romantic tastes and ^{both} were inspired by an antiquarian zeal in the field of Gothic architecture. But Joseph the elder brother was less gifted as a poet than his brother Thomas. His verses have less force and originality. Gray in one of his letters remarks - 'Joseph Warton has but little invention, very poetical choice of expression, and a good ear.' He oscillated between ^{by} Greek and Gothic tastes and expressed his preference for Grecian simplicity to Gothic complexity -

'A vast variety of angles and cavities ; clusters of little columns, and a crowd of windows, and what distinguishes meanness of manner in building from greatness ; that is the Gothic from the Grecian : in which every decoration arises from necessity and use, and every pillar has something to support.'

His illustrious brother Thomas Warton, whom as a great mediaevalist had unbounded passion for the Gothic, was not altogether free from classical predilections. His universally admired Verses on Sir Joshua Reynolds's Painted Window at New College (1782), containing his recantation of Gothic heresies, begins with a romantic description of the Gothic style -

'the vaulted dome,
Where the tall shafts, that mount in massy pride
Their mingling branches, shoot from side to side ;
Where elfin sculptors, with fantastic clue,
O'er the long roof their wild embroidery drew.'

Warton is out to explore 'Gothic art with Gothic manners.' But immediately after his passionate description of Gothic art, he is seized by a 'Grecian gusto' at the sight of Sir Joshua Reynolds's classical design. The Gothic leanings are dismissed as 'a pensive bard's mistaken strain', and we are charmed by the poet's rhapsody over Attic art with her 'chaste design, just proportion and the genuine line/-

'Those tints, that steal no glories from the day,
Nor ask the sun to lend his streaming ray ;
The doubtful radiance of contending dyes,
That faintly mingle, yet distinctly rise ;
'Twixt life and shade the transitory strife ;
The feature blooming with immortal life.'

Reynolds's powerful hand has broken the 'Gothic chain' and has brought our poet to truth. According to Prof. Nichol Smith Warton's heart was 'never wholly given to the Gothic in literature' but his love for Gothic architecture was unquestioned. (1)

(1) Prof. David Nichol Smith, 'Warton's History of English Poetry' (Warton Lecture : 1929), Proceedings of the British Academy, Vol.XV.

Warton's admirable poem on the Painted Window is an embodiment of the contending spirit of the times. The Grecian and the Gothic - these two streams of taste were running parallel in the eighteenth century. The classical and romantic ideals were both gleaming before the eyes of artists. Ideas of classic proportion and symmetry, reason and common-sense were struggling with the newly-awakened taste for passion and imagination, wonder and mystery. Neo-classic traditions flourished side by side with a desire for escape into a romantic sanctuary of strangeness and novelty. The colleges of Oxford and Cambridge began to consider the possibilities of a poetry which should reconcile the Gothic and the Classic. Gray in Cambridge was influenced by both tendencies. Collins in Oxford, like Warton, aimed at a reconciliation in his description of the Temple of Liberty -

'In Gothic pride it seemed to rise !
Yet, Graecia's graceful Orders join,
Majestic thro' the mix'd design.'

Prof. Garrod thinks that the best both of Collins and of Gray 'proceeds from conditions where the distinction of classic and Gothic has very little meaning'. (1) Prof. Garrod's remark is very appropriate, because we have already shown in the Introduction how these seemingly conflicting tastes were but facets of the same Beauty which the poets and artists of this age attempted to ^{grasp} ~~grasp~~. These two tastes are finely mixed up in the character and writings of Thomas Warton. He was primarily a follower of the classical canons of taste. His belief in the dignity of general terms has been cited by Prof. W.P.Ker as 'a fair test of conservative literary opinion

(1) Prof. H.W.Garrod, 'The Poetry of Collins' (Warton Lecture : 1928), Proceedings of the Br. Acad., Vol. XIV, p.25.

in the eighteenth century.' (1) Warton was famous for his prodigious learningⁿ in his age . But his learning did not freeze his imagination, which was ever eager to soar aloft. His vigorous and original mind defied conventions, and sought for inspiration in unexpected quarters. As a scholar he always lets facts speak for themselves. Much of the information contained in his criticism may sound common-place to us, but in his day it had the charm of discovery. His Observations on Spenser ⁽¹⁷⁵⁴⁾ and the monumental History of English Poetry (1774-81) are great documents in the movement towards Romance. In the latter work he has traced from the earliest times down to 1600 the influence of classical and romantic movements upon English poetry. His expression of sympathy for Gothic romance in this book is a record of the rising taste for revolt against the school of Pope. The eighteenth century taste was in the process of evolution. It was transforming the rational age of Pope into the imaginative and romantic age of Wordsworth. Warton found in the old romances a mode of escape from the beaten road of the classics. He discusses the origin of Romantic Fiction in his Dissertation I in The History of English Poetry -

'That peculiar and arbitrary species of Fiction, which we commonly called the Romantic, was entirely unknown to the writers of Greece and Rome : It appears to have been imported into Europe by a people whose modes of thinking and habits of invention are not natural to the country. It is generally supposed to have been borrowed from the Arabians.'

Warton's defect was that his historical aim was restricted to antiquarian collection ; but he was not an antiquary of the first rank. As a typical ^{Renaissance} scholar , he took up a patronising attitude towards the Middle Ages. He was lacking in the

(1) W.P.Ker, 'The Literary Influence of the Middle Ages ', The Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol.X, Chapter X, p.239.

breadth of historic sympathy for entering into the spirit of the romance-writers. He judged the mediaeval works from a superior point of view. Notwithstanding this defect, Warton deserves all the praise that has been awarded to him 'as a pioneer of the reaction against literary intolerance. The generous recognition extended by him to the work of the older English poets was of the greatest value in widening the area of national taste.' (1)

Gothic gloom appears in Warton's Pleasures of Melancholy (1747), an early poem with a thoroughly Gothic setting. Seated among the ruins, the poet describes the surrounding atmosphere of gloom -

'Beneath yon ruin'd abbey's moss-grown piles
Oft let me sit, at twilight hour of eve,
Where through some western window the pale moon
Pours her long-levell'd rule of streaming light ;
When sullen sacred silence reigns around,
Save the lone screech-owl's note, who builds his bower
Among the mouldering caverns dark and damp.'

The conventional properties of the Gothic strike our eye at every turn in 'Midnight's raven-coloured robe', 'Hollow charnel', dim taper shedding livid glare, airy voices talking and ghostly shapes inviting our poet with a beckoning hand.

The Gothic vein of Thomas Warton also finds expression in his Sonnets . The 'piercing eye of the poet' explores

'New manners, and the pomp of elder days,
When culls the pensive bard his pictur'd stores.'

Having seen the 'princely dome' of Wilton House, the poet is loth to retire to humbler scene. His breast all 'glows from those gorgeous towers' with their

(1) Prof. J.W.Courthope, 'Ancient and Modern Romance'

(Warton Lecture), Proceed. of the Br. Acad.,
1911-12, p.246.

'living hues where the warm pencil pours,
And breathing forms from the rude marble start.'

In his Sonnet on King Arthur's Round Table the poet gives us a brief picture of a Norman castle with its 'rafter'd hall' and 'high-hung remains.' In his Ode on the Approach of Summer the poet takes us to

'Gloomy Gothic towers ;
Amid whose howling aisles and halls,
Where no gay sunbeam paints the walls.'

This poem, like his complimentary verses to Reynolds, shows the alternation of his sympathies between Gothic and classic. The poet expresses his sympathies for Greece-

'Let me in many a whispered rite
The genius old of Greece invite
With that fair wreath my brows to bind.'

At the next moment 'the raven wakes' his 'tranced mind'. This mood of Gothic gloom is dispelled by the beauty of Nature -

'Some breezy summit's brow sublime,
Whence Nature's universal face
Illumined smiles with new-born grace ;
The misty streams that wind below
The silver-sparkling lustre glow;
The groves and castled cliffs appear
Invested all in radiance clear.'

From romantic nature-poetry with all its dewy freshness the poet passes on again to luxuriate on the achievements of Grecian art -

'Give me beneath the cool shades to sit,
Rapt with the charms of classic wit ,
To catch the bold heroic flame,
That build immortal Graecia's fame.'

In Crusade : An Ode the poet takes us into the Gothic atmosphere of the supernatural -

'When eve has hushed the buzzing camp,
Amid the moonlight vapours damp,
Thy necromantic forms, in vain ,
Haunt us on the tented plain :
We bid these spectre-shapes avaunt.'

The scenic pageantry of the Middle Ages has been vividly

described by Warton in his Ode on the Grave of King Arthur .
 On his appointment as poet-laureate in 1785, Warton wrote
 his first Ode on His Majesty's Birthday in which he recorded
 the prevailing Grecian taste in art -

'Sculpture, licentious now no more,
 From Greece her great example takes,
 With Nature's warmth the marble wakes,
 And spurns the toys of modern lore :
 In native beauty simple planned,
 Corinth thy tufted shafts ascend ;
The Graces guide the painter's hand,
Her magic mimicry to blend.'

Thomas Warton represents not only the two conflicting ideals
 of the Grecian and the Gothic, but he is 'the most represen-
 tative of the general romantic spirit of the age, a spirit which
 influenced and changed^d all departments of life, from the
 refashioning of garden and architecture to that of songs and
 pictures.'⁽¹⁾ He absorbed all the various influences of his time-
 its love of melancholy, of solitude, of the picturesque,
 reverie, introspection and retrospection - all the threads,
 in short, which ultimately mingled in the tangled skein of
 romanticism.

Thomas Warton had collected a number of ballads
 which he sent to Bishop Percy who acknowledged them with
 obligation. By the time Percy published his famous ballad-
 collection, Reliques of Ancient English Poetry,⁽¹⁷⁶⁵⁾ the Gothic taste
 had already made its way. The ground had been well prepared
 by the predecessors, and it is no wonder that Percy's work
 met with unbounded popular favour. Bishop Hurd had revealed
 the treasures of the Gothic romances : Warton tried to
 recapture the spirit of those romances in his poetry : Percy
 stimulated a taste for country-songs. A stream of mediaeval

(1) Oswald Doughty, Modern Language Review, Vol. XXIV, 1929,
 p.88.

influence began to flow in the poetry of the age from the Reliques. Scott, Coleridge and Keats drank deep from Percy's fountain. But for Percy's efforts, The Ancient Mariner, The Lady of the Lake, Le Belle Dame Sans Merci might not have seen the light.

Even before Percy, Addison must be given the credit of opening the eyes of men to the unrivalled treasures of ballad-poetry in his essays of the Spectator (Nos. 70, 74, 85). He had selected only two ballads, Chevy Chase and Two Children in the Wood as typical examples of naturalness and simplicity. Addison was not struck by their Gothic elements of the supernatural and the marvellous which appear so prominently in Percy's collections. In 'The Wife of Usher's Well' the ghosts of the sons who have died at sea come to bid farewell to their mother. In 'Young Hunting' birds show the place where the corpse lies interred. In 'Fair Margaret and Sweet William' the ghost of the forsaken lady-love pays a nocturnal visit to her false lover. The conventional properties of the Gothic supernatural have been so subtly handled and deftly manipulated that it induces a willing suspension of disbelief on the reader's part. In 'Child Waters' we enter into the very heart of the mediaeval world: with knights, monks, pilgrims and robbers.

The appearance of Thomas Chatterton, a poet inspired especially by the architecture of the past, a great Gothic Cathedral, is highly significant in this age of Gothic Revival. Chatterton's Brystowe Tragedy or The Death of Syr Charles Bawdin (1772) may vie with some of the ballads in

percy's Reliques . This ballad of 392 lines is strong, fiery and direct, and on it were exhausted Chatterton's best literary powers. We move in a wonderfully bright atmosphere and the tragic scene is enacted in broad day-light. Blake was indebted to this ballad for his early poem Gwin King of Norway.

In his Storie of William Canynge, Chatterton represents himself as lying beside a brooklet, listening to the water, and gazing at the oziers, alders and reeds. Descriptions of the glories of Nature abound in his AElla which has been called Chatterton's citadel. The following lines from the Minstrel's Song show the poet's observing eye-

'The boddynge flourettes blashes atte the lyghte ;
The mees be sprenge wyth the yellowe hue
Yun daiseyed mantels ys the mountayne dyghte ;
The nesh yonge coweslepe bendethe wyth the dewe.' (1)

The description of Autumn that follows is like an intermediate stage between Thomson and Keats -

'Whanne Autumne blake and somme-brente doe appere
Wyth hys souldre honde guylteynge the falleynge lofe
Bryngeynge oppe Wynter to falfylle the yere
Beerynge uponne hys backe the riped shefe ;
When al the hyls wythe woddie sede ys whyte ;
Whanne levynne-fyres and lemes do mete from far the
syghte.
Whanne the fayre apple, rudde as even skie
Do bende the tree unto the fructyle grounde ;
When joicie peres and berries of blacke die,
Doe daunce yu ayre, and call the eyne arounde
Thann, bee the even foule, or even fayre,
Meethynckes mie hartys joie ys steynced wyth somme care.

Chatterton realised that he could never find his right voice if he spoke the stilted poetic diction of his own day.

Therefore, he went back to the Middle Ages to fashion a poetic speech of his own. He created a new world for poetry by the revival of old words and by the adoption of novel metres and rhythms quite different from the current taste. Keats professed his sympathy with this new movement initiated by Chatterton.

(1) Thomas Chatterton, Works. Ed. Skeat, 2 Vols., Aldine Poets, 1875.

The octosyllabics of Sir Walter Scott were foreshadowed in Chatterton's The Unknown Knyght. Lord Byron who was a great admirer of Chatterton borrowed the word 'gore-faced' (Childe Harold , I, 48) from Chatterton's 'Goddwyn' (I, 210). The Miltonic measure of Chatterton's Elinoure and Juga (1769) and the Balade of Charitie exercised influence on Wordsworth's Resolution and Independence (1802).

The mediaeval world had a far more powerful appeal to Chatterton than to Walpole, Gray or Warton. Warton had his moments of hesitation, doubt and apology; but Chatterton's 'was an untutored and overwhelming passion, an obsession'. (1) Chatterton was not a connoisseur or a man of cultivated taste like any of his predecessors or contemporaries. The great Church of St. Mary Redcliffe in Bristol dominated his imagination and the Redcliffe meadows appeared to him crowded with mediaeval scenes. The ancient colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, the visible monuments of a bygone age, had stimulated an antiquarian interest in Warton and Gray : the untutored genius of Chatterton derived much more lively inspiration from the soaring and majestic Gothic Church. His was not a mere scholarly interest in Gothic architecture, but a deep feeling for the mediaeval world.

Apart from the mediaeval atmosphere of the Rowley Poems (1779), Chatterton depicted some horror-scenes in his African Eclogues . The following lines from his Neccar and Gaira (1770) are Salvatorial-

(1) W.M.Dixon, Warton Lecture on Chatterton, 1930,
Proceed. of the Br. Acad., Vol. XVI, p.191.

'Where the rough Caigra rolls the surgy wave,
 Urging his thunders through the echoing cave ;
 Where the sharp rocks, in distant horror seen,
 Drive the white currents thro' the spreading green.'

The Death of Nicon opens with a horrid scene of Tiber's banks -

'Circling all the horrid mountain round,
 Rushes impetuous to the deep profound ;
 Rolls o'er the ragged rocks the hideous yell ;
 Collects its waves beneath the earth's vast shell ;
 There for a while in loud confusion hurled,
 It crumbles mountains down and shakes the world ;
 Till borne upon the pinions of the air,
 Through the rent earth the bursting waves appear ;
 Fiercely propelled the whitened billows rise,
 Break from the cavern and ascend the skies.'

These lines are conceived in the true romantic temper.

Thomson's Seasons and Salvator's paintings had already created a taste for the sublime. Chatterton's graphic pictures of the tremendous destructive forces of Nature must have been relished by his contemporaries. His poems found enthusiastic admirers among the leading romantic poets of the next generation.

The growing appreciation of mountain-scenery is seen again in Beattie's Minstrel (1771-74) which must find a place in any discussion on Gothic taste in the eighteenth century. The following Salvatorial picture is quite in consonance with the taste of the times¹

'Thither he hired, enamoured of the scene ;
 For rocks on rocks piled, as by magic spell,
 Here scorched with lightning, there with ivy green,
 Fenced from the north and east the savage dell.
 Southward a mountain rose with easy swell,
 Whose long long groves eternal murmur made ;
 And toward the western sun a streamlet fell,
 Where through the cliffs, the eye remote survey'd
 Blue hills and glittering waves, and skies in gold arrayed.
 (1)

The design of the Minstrel is to trace the progress of a poetical genius, a young shepherd who 'lived in Gothic days.'

(1) James Beattie in Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVIII

We breathe the Gothic atmosphere in the following lines-

'When the long-sounding curfew from afar
Loaded with loud lament the lonely dale.
Young Edwin, lighted by the evening star,
Lingering and listening, wandered down the vale.
There would he dream of graves and corpses pale.'

The poet creates a sickening atmosphere by the accumulation of horror upon horror. But the poem is full of passages showing his eye for the picturesque -

'Along yon glittering sky what glory streams !
What majesty attends Night's lovely queen !
Fair laugh our valleys in the vernal beams ;
And mountains rise, and oceans roll between,
And all conspire to beautify the scene.'

Beattie's Minstrel is an anticipation of Wordsworth's Prelude being the first handling of the theme of 'the growth of a poet's soul' as a fit subject for poetry. Beattie derived the suggestion from Percy's preliminary essay in his Reliques. Beattie had read Gray, Collins and other romantic poets of the period. Although deficient in high poetic power, Beattie shows a taste for the grand and the sublime in Nature.

The taste for the sublime in Nature is found to a very great extent in James Macpherson's Ossianic Poems (1762-63). The scene of most of Ossian's poems is laid in Scotland or in the coast of Ireland. The scenes of both Fingal (1762) and Temora (1763) are laid in Ireland. Macpherson possessed descriptive power in a high degree and he has given us several instances of exquisite painting. Temora opens with the following scene -

'The blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze. Grey torrents pour their noisy streams.

Two green hills, with aged oaks, surround a narrow plain.
The blue course of a stream is there.'

Natural descriptions, grave and gay, abound in the work.
Metaphors and similes are profusely drawn from thunder,
lightning, tempest and other destructive forces of Nature.
Macpherson always tries to raise the reader to the height
of the sublime. ^{In Temora} Trehmor is described (in Book II) as

'clothed with meteors, descends from the halls
of thunder, pouring the dark storm before him over the
troubled sea.'

The sound of the approaching army (Bk.II) is described as
follows -

'The sound of their steps is like thunder, in the
bosom of the ground, when the rocking hills shake their
groves, and not a blast pours from the darkened sky.'

The following is a striking picture from Bk.IV-

'As roll the troubled clouds, round a meteor of
night, when they brighten their sides, with its light,
along the heaving sea : so gathered Erin, around the
gleaming form of Atha's king.'

The following desert-scene is contained in a simile (Bk.V)-

'But the kings were like two rocks in the midst,
each with its dark head of pines, when they are seen in
the desert, above low-sailing mist. High on their face
are streams, which spread their foam on blasts.'

A tranquil scene has been drawn in Bk. V-

'A valley spreads green behind the hill, with its ~~thr~~
three blue streams. The scene is there in silence ; and
the dun mountain-roes come down.'

Macpherson was very fond of drawing pictures of mist. ^{Temora} Bk.VII
contains a vivid description of a kind of mist, rising by
night, from the Lake Lego -

'From the wood-skirted waters of Lego, ascend,
at times, greybosomed mists, when the gates of the west
are closed on the sun's eagle eye. Wide, o'er Lara's stream,
is poured the vapour dark and deep : the moon, like a dim
shield, is swimming through its folds.'

Macpherson paints the same face of rude Nature - a country

wholly uncultivated, thinly inhabited, and recently peopled. The grass of the rock, the flower of the heath, the thistle with its beard, are the chief ingredients of his landscape. 'The desert', says Fingal, 'is enogh^u to me, with all its woods and deer.' The poet tried to avoid abstract expression as far as possible and presented concrete images. If a simile is drawn from mountain, lake or sea, it is particularised - it is the hill of Cromla, the storm of the sea of Malmor, or the reeds of the Lake of Lego. By adopting this device he has been able to re-create the atmosphere⁽¹⁾ of the ancient world. The style is also concise and full of images, adding vividness to the scene -

'The winds came down on the woods. The torrents rushed from the rocks. Rain gathered round the head of Cromla; and the red stars trembled between the flying clouds.'⁽²⁾

Macpherson was very sparing in the use of words and images. He produces telling effect by means of a few touches-

'The black skiff bounded on the ocean; and travelled on the wings of the blast. A spirit once embroiled the night. Seas swell and rocks resound. Winds drive along the clouds. The lightning flies on wings of fire.'⁽³⁾

It is the uniformity of Ossian's imageries that tires us a little. The work is thick-sown with similes, and the same comparisons appear again and again. The Moon, the Cloud and the Thunder are common properties. The poet is at his best in describing the weird grandeur of Nature-

'They sunk behind the hill like two pillars of the fire of night: when winds pursue them over the mountain, and the flaming heath resounds. Beside a stream of roaring foam his cave is in a rock. One tree bends above it; and the rushing winds echo against its sides.'⁽⁴⁾

(1) Dr. Blair's Critical Dissertation on James Macpherson's Poems of Ossian (in two Vols., Perth: 1795)

(2) Fingal, Bk. II

(3) Ibid, Bk. III

(4) Ibid, Bk. IV.

Passages like these contributed to the formation of a taste for the sublime in the eighteenth century. Byron was an inheritor of the Ossianic mood in his passion for the mountains and the sea, for night, tempest and wilderness. In reading Byron's apostrophe to the ocean in Childe Harold we recall Macpherson's address to the sun-

'O thou that rollest above, round as the shield of my fathers.'

Strictly speaking, Macpherson's Ossianic Poems come under the category of 'picturesque' poetry, but we are discussing him in connection with the Gothic Taste, because we are carried back to a primitive age, tradition having placed Fingal in the third century. Although the atmosphere of this world is quite different from that of the mediaeval world, there are some aspects which evoke common memories and fill the mind with images of vague sublimity and desolation. The ghosts of heroes half-seen by the setting moon in the Ossianic Poems reminds us of the supernatural atmosphere of the mediaeval world. These poems supplied the eighteenth century which was groping toward the rude, the primitive and the heroic, with new ideals and enthusiasms. Love of melancholy which is one of the prominent features of ~~the~~ Gothic taste is present in Ossian. It also satisfied the dawning sense of admiration for mountain solitudes and the hoary past. The grand and solemn images appealed to the imagination. The imagination was seized at once by the energetic and forceful descriptions. The pictorial description of the scenery of the western Highlands developed the new ideas of the picturesque.

The same admiration for mountains and solitudes appears in Mrs. Radcliffe's Mysteries of Udolpho (1794). She was once called the Salvator Rosa of British novelists, because like the painter she was a lover of the romantic and terrible. The Mysteries was preceded by two other romances- The Sicilian Romance (1790) and The Romance of the Forest (1791). Both works contain copious descriptions of scenery. She is eminently successful in depicting vivid landscape-pieces in the latter novel-

'On the side of the lake, nearly opposite to the chateau, the mountains receded, and a long chain of Alps were seen in perspective. Their innumerable tints and shades, some veiled in blue mists, some tinged with rich purple, and others glittering in partial light, gave luxurious colouring to the scene. ' (1)

'Dark woods, intermingled with bold projections of rock, sometimes barren, and sometimes covered with the purple bloom of wild flowers, impended over the lake, and were seen in the clear mirror of the waters.' (2)

Mrs. Radcliffe captures our imagination by her thrilling descriptions of the mountain-forests and the lake, of the obscure solitude, of cloud and storm and of ruined castles. Wild bandittis appear in her descriptions as on Salvator's canvas. The following is a typical Salvatorial passage-

'Through the deep valleys between the mountains were, for the most part, clothed with pines, sometimes an abrupt opening presented a perspective of ohly barren rocks, with a cataract flashing from their summit among broken cliffs, till its waters, reaching the bottom, foamed along with louder fury ; and sometimes pastoral scenes exhibited their green delights in the narrow vales, smiling amid ~~sd~~ surrounding horror.' (3)

She is fond of describing the 'wild and romantic scenes' round about the Alps, producing a sense of indescribable awe-

'Mountains, whose shaggy steeps appeared to be inaccessible, almost surrounded it (that is, the valley). To the east, a vista opened, and exhibited the Apennines in the darkest horrors- and the long perspectives of retiring summits rising over each other, their ridges clothed with

(1) Tales of Mystery, ed. by G. Saintsbury (1891), p.29
 (2) Ibid, p.28. (3) Ibid, p.41.

pinces, exhibited a stronger image of grandeur than any that Emily had yet seen.' (1)

'Tremendous crags' and 'scathed branches of oaks' are common features in her descriptions. The following mountainous scene is highly picturesque-

'A scene of mountains stretched in long perspective ... still vast pine-forests hung upon their base, and crowned the ridgy precipice that rose perpendicularly from the vale, while above, the rolling mists caught the sun-beams, and touched their cliffs with all the magical colouring of light and shade.' (2)

Mrs. Radcliffe's descriptions appealed to the newly developed sense of the picturesque. Her Venice by moon-light, her mountain-gorges with their black pines and foaming torrents, may not be quite to the modern taste, but they are impressive in their own way. She succeeded in her melodramatic treatment of the landscape by taking Salvator Rosa as her model. Her pictorial descriptions are marked by true poetic feeling.

As a mediaevalist, Mrs. Radcliffe was a descendant of Horace Walpole. She is well-skilled in producing the romantic sense of mystery. The supernatural elements contained in The Castle of Otranto re-appear in her description of the Castle of Udolpho, and of the ruined abbey in her Romance of the Forest. Her description of the Gothic Abbey is a vivid reproduction of the spirit of Gothic architecture,

'A Gothic gate, richly ornamented with fret-work, which opened into the main body of the edifice, remained entire. Above the vast and magnificent portal of this gate arose a window of the same order, whose pointed arches still exhibited fragments of stained glass, once the pride of monkish devotion.'

There is a sense of weird presences in these vast empty rooms. Her description of supernatural sights and sounds create in us a feeling of suspense and danger.

(1) Tales of Mystery, (op.cit.), p.41.

(2) Ibid, p.40.

Mrs. Radcliffe's scenery has been highly praised by Sir Walter Raleigh who has found Wordsworthian elements in her descriptions of flood and fell, sunset and storm. (1) She assigned power to Nature over the moods and passions of her characters, but it would be an exaggeration to say that she is a romantic like Wordsworth. We may call her a good landscape-painter. At best she approaches Wordsworth's early poems, The Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches. But Wordsworth's travel-poems were inspired ~~were inspired~~ by vivid personal experiences, whereas in the language of Sir Walter Raleigh 'the essence of Mrs. Radcliffe's scenery is that it is ficti^{ti}ous'. We must however give her credit for drawing scenes which are broad and marked by a unity of design. She had a keen eye for noting the most picturesque aspects of natural phenomena. By following Salvator Rosa as her model she could produce a Gothic sense of terror and melancholy. In her novels we find a singular combination of the various tastes of the time- taste for melancholy, ^{taste} for the supernatural, love of landscape-painting and of pictorial description.

From our study of the literary figures under 'Gothic Taste' we find that they all helped forward the movement towards Romance. Horace Walpole, the most typical figure of this age, reflected all the important tendencies of this age. He drew his inspiration from the mediaeval world, from Claude, Salvator and Poussin, and from landscape-gardens.

(1) Sir Walter Raleigh, The English Novel, (Lond :1916), p.232.

Besides his activities in the direction of the Gothic Revival, he was in close touch with William Kent, 'the father of modern gardening', who was engaged by his father Sir Robert Walpole in embellishing his famous estate of Houghton Hall at Norfolk. Horace Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting was a useful work on ~~that~~ the subject in this age and its famous last chapter entitled, The Essay on Modern Gardening explained the relationship between landscape-gardening and landscape-painting. Gray's interests were not so varied and many-sided as Walpole's but he was a more thorough-going antiquary. Bishop Hurd and Thomas Warton opened the eyes of men to the treasures of mediaeval Romance. The untutored genius of Chatterton presented the Middle Ages in a more concrete form. He peopled these ages with living figures and invested them with an atmosphere of romance. Macpherson's Ossian attempted to achieve the same result by taking men back to the primitive world. Mrs. Radcliffe created an ideal world of landscape. We have seen how, like Walpole, she combined in herself the prominent ideals of her age. It is interesting to note how the Gothic gloom is always enlivened by a sunny and bright outlook. It is the eminently picturesque aspects of the Gothic which appealed to the men of this age. The eighteenth century was a great age of reconstruction and the literary men, as children of their age, reflected the current ideas and at the same time looked forward for new ideals and enthusiasms. The transitional nature of the taste of this period is most conspicuous from the life and writings of Walpole, Gray, Hurd and Thomas Warton.

(II) CHINESE TASTE.

The Chinese taste went hand in hand with the Gothic. Both arose out of a desire for the grotesque. Neo-classic ideals of correctness, symmetry and proportion had come to pall upon the men of the eighteenth century and they ran after everything that smacked of the bizarre and the fantastic. It was the Gothic Revival which gave the original impulse to such taste, and China came to offer a secondary source of inspiration. Both tastes satisfied the popular craving for novelty, variety and pleasing irregularity. The two tastes were so inseparably blended in men's minds that Gothic Revivalists like Gray and Walpole speak of them in the same breath. Walpole in his letter to Horace Mann refers to 'the liberty of taste' in his time -

'I am almost as fond of the Sharawaggi or Chinese want of symmetry in buildings, as in grounds or gardens. I am sure, whenever you come to England, you will be pleased with the liberty of taste into which we are struck.' (1)

The 'charming irregularity' of the Chinese style offered a pleasing contrast to the Grecian ideal. Writing to Richard Benteley, Walpole speaks of the Gothic and the Chinese in the same breath- 'a garden-seat, Chinese on the one side, and Gothic on the other.' (2) Whenever he was repelled by classic regularity, Walpole sought for refuge in Gothic or Chinese. The villas of Tuscany appeared to him out of

(1) Horace Walpole, Letters, Toynbee (op.cit.), Vol.II, p.433.
'Sharawaggi or Sharawadgi' is a word employed by the Chinese to indicate the beauty of studied irregularity. The word was very popular in the XVIIIth century'

- Johnson's England, Vol.II, p.36

(2) Horace Walpole, Letters, Toynbee, Vol. III, p.119.

taste, inasmuch as they were 'laboured by their unnatural regularity and art to destroy the romanticness of the situation', and Walpole at once goes in search for 'buildings, temples and bridges, Gothic or Chinese, giving a whimsical air of novelty that is very pleasing.' (1)

In his Strawberry Hill he introduced Chinese rococo which had come in vogue. Rococo is representative of the art of restless movement.

Chinese temples, pavilions and pagodas and other places of entertainment became the favourite fashion in the eighteenth century. The interior of the house with its wall-papers, mirrors, beds and tables fully reflected the new taste for Chinese rococos. Horace Walpole wrote-

'A China-room might casuistically be interpreted a pagodaI intend to convert the old blue and white hall into a Gothic columbarium.' (2)

We may form an idea of the extent of Chinese influence in the interior of the house from Mrs. Lybbe Powys's description-

'The Chinese bed-room (Managareth) and dressing-room in the attic storey, is excessive droll and pretty, furnished exactly as in China.' (3)

Chinese wall-papers, painted in vivid colours, representing flowers, trees and birds, were very commonly used to cover the walls of bed-rooms. These Chinese landscape-paintings on wall-paper were meant as a background for life, and not as objects for separate aesthetic contemplation.

Chinese dress and costumes, their plants and mode of

(1) Horace Walpole, Letters, Toynbee, Vol.III, p.4.

(2) Ibid, Vol.VI, p.119.

(3) Passages from the Diary of Mrs Lybbe Powys, 1756-1808, pp.62-63.

cultivation of tea, and their various sports and pastimes were realistically depicted on these papers. There existed a taste for Indian hangings too, printed in glowing colours. People of the eighteenth century were eager to break the dull monotony of the native style by borrowing from foreign designs. Their craze for novelty, variety and irregularity was not confined to the major arts of architecture alone. It extended to the province of decoration and minor arts, to jewellery, furniture, household appliances, plates and crockery. A hobby of collecting porcelain came to prevail among the fashionable men of the time. They were much more fond of China than home-made wares. Gray refers to 'China-basket' in one of his letters. (1) John Gay in his Lines to a Lady on Her Passion for Old China has left a vivid picture of contemporary Chinese delirium-

'China is the passion of her soul ;
A cup, a plate, a dish, a bowl ,
Can kindle wishes in her breast,
Inflame with joy or break her rest

...
Husbands more covetous than sage
Condemn this China-buying rage.'

Addison in The Lover (No. 10) comments on the prevailing passion for China-ware - 'There are no inclinations in women which more surprise me than their passions for chalk and china.' Demand for Oriental porcelain became very great in the reign of Queen Anne, because the habit of tea-drinking had just become very fashionable. Painted cups and saucers were imported from the East. English craftsmen began to imitate the irregularity and eccentricity of Chinese decoration. Horace Walpole refers to the Persian,

(1)

(1) Gray, Works, ed. by Gosse, Vol. II, p.388.

Chinese and Indian tastes in one and the same passage-
'A Persian shield enamelled, an Indian sabre and dagger,
a Chinese bow, quiver and arrows.' (1)

The forces which mould and determine the character of a lovely Chinese vase or a graceful Queen Anne chair flow in part from the creative imagination of the artist or designer, and partly from a number of external sources which wed beauty to bare utility. An artistic idea animates the shape, stamps it with proportion or grace, and embellishes it with ornament and colour. The creative imagination of the artists in the eighteenth century tried to secure delight from Chinese art, because they found it full of life and movement. It also satisfied their sense of harmony and proportion. The beautiful curves show conformity to law. The curves are an expression of uniformity and regularity. The eye following the waving line perceives the orderly continuity of the curvature. The curves of the Chinese vase afford good aesthetic satisfaction. Although it does not belong to a high order of aesthetic experience - not comparable to the art of the painter - it has its value in the economy of life. To furnish a room with suitable works of Chinese Art required some artistic taste, however small.

It is erroneous to think that Chinese art is characterised entirely by elements of whimsical extravagance. The great classic Chung Yung contains the doctrine of equilibrium and harmony-

'Equilibrium is the great principle. If Equilibrium and Harmony exist everything will occupy its proper place and all things will be nourished and flourish.' (2)

(1) Horace Walpole, Letters, Toynbee, V, 215.

(2) Chung Yung, quoted by Ogden, Richards and Wood in The Foundation of AEsthetics, London : 1922.

Notwithstanding the common elements of harmony and proportion, Chinese Art is to be distinguished from Greek Art. On comparing a Chinese vase with a Greek vase we find that 'a Greek vase does ^{conform} to exact geometric laws, and its perfection is cold and lifeless.' (1) There is more vitality in the Chinese or Japanese vase, because its beauty is not so regular. A Greek vase is the type of classical harmony which is static : a Chinese vase represents dynamic harmony, in its healthy movement. William Blake's remark-' Grecian is ~~mathematical~~ form : Gothic is living form'- may also be applied to Chinese art in contrast to the Greek.

The influence of the Chinese style in the eighteenth century was most strongly felt in landscape-gardening. Sir William Chambers's name stands out in bold relief in this connection. He had been to China and on his return to England, he tried to introduce the Chinese style of gardening. A mania for wild irregularity in gardening had already set in. Addison, in his essay in the Spectator (No. 414) praised the Chinese garden for its luxuriance and grandeur. (2) It stood in marked contrast to the English garden where everything was square and geometrically set. Pope also voiced the same sentiment by railing against 'grove nodding at grove and each alley having its brother.' (3) Sir William Chambers's taste for the grotesque fitted in exactly with the new-born ideas of the landscape-garden. The Chinese fashion of gardening introduced by him into

(1) Herbert Read, Meaning of Beauty, p.11

(2) Vide Chapter VI infra.

(3) Ibid.

England had a tremendous and far-reaching influence on the Continent. The 'Anglo-Chinois' garden became so famous that the French ridiculed the English. Horace Walpole refers to this in one of his letters-

'Anglo-French gardens, which they call Anglo-Chinois gardens, which as they say that by the help of Sir William Chambers's lunettes they have detected us for having stolen our gardens from the Chinese.' (1)

Gray in one of his letters, has triumphantly vindicated the English garden as a purely indigenous art -

'The only taste we call our own, the only proof of our original talent in the matter of pleasure ; I mean, our skill in gardening, and laying out grounds.' (2)

Gray then proceeds to disclaim altogether any indebtedness to the Chinese in the matter of gardening-

'That the Chinese have this beautiful art in high perfection seems very probable from Chambers's little discourse published some few years ago. But it is very certain, we copied nothing from them, nor had anything but Nature for our model. It is not forty years, since the art was born among us ; and it is sure, that there is nothing in Europe like it, and as sure, we then had then no information on this ~~head~~ from China at all.'

Whatever might have been the extent of the indebtedness of the English to the Chinese garden, Sir William Chambers's Dissertation on Oriental Gardening (1772) created a furore in his time. His main end and endeavour was to make the English garden resemble the Chinese 'garden of idea.' He classified the Chinese garden into three divisions, the pleasing, the terrible and the surprising. He 'sought to agitate the mind by a variety of opposing passions.' His insistence on passions and ideas in gardening is quite in keeping with the Chinese principle of art, as laid down

(1) Horace Walpole, Letters, Toynbee, Vol. IX, p.243.

(2) Gray, Works, Gosse, Vol. III, p.160.

by a Chinese artist, Wang Wei- 'In landscape the idea must come first : the carrying out of the idea follows.' (1) Sir William Chambers illustrated his theories in Kew Gardens which are very suggestive and fraught with emotional appeal. Each new variety and pleasing surprise was primarily meant to produce a new mood. He ascribed the success of Chinese gardening to the splendid qualities of their gardeners, their genius, quickness of perception, fertility of imagination, and through knowledge of the human mind. In carrying out the Chinese principle, Sir William was true to the correct Chinese tradition, as indicated by Arthur Waley -

'It is not the plastic, the purely visual side of landscape that inspired the Chinese painters, but rather the mood, the spiritual content of the scene.' (2) There is good deal of similarity between Chinese natural scenery and Salvator Rosa's landscapes. Chinese scenery may be said to be truly Salvatorial. Some critics, therefore, maintain that Sir William's alternation in garden-scene from the pleasing to the terrible is derived from Rosa and not from China. But when we regard his early experiences in China and his passionate fondness for the Chinese ideal, the Chinese influence seems to be very plausible. It is interesting to note what Mr. Waley says on 'the passionate love of mountain-scenery which dominates Chinese landscape-painting-

'Chinese feeling for Nature has been unknown in Europe till the close of the eighteenth century. The Chinese did not merely love Nature : they were in love with her. So were the European romantics.' (3)

(1) Arthur David Waley, An Introduction to the Study of Chinese Painting (London : 1923)

(2) Ibid, pp.138-139

(3) Ibid, p.173.

It is no~~w~~ wonder, therefore, that having been in China, Sir William was inspired by the wild grandeur of mountain-scenery and he tried to reproduce the elements of grandeur and sublimity in his gardens. In his Dissertation he gives a vivid account of Chinese landscape-

'Their scenes of terror are composed of gloomy, deep valleys, inaccessible to the sun, impending barren rocks, dark caverns, and impetuous cataracts. The trees are ill-formed, forced out of their natural directions and seemingly torn to pieces by the violence of tempeststhe buildings are in ruins, or half-consumed by fire, or swept away by the fury of the waters ; nothing remains entire but a few venerable huts dispersed in the mountains.'

This word-picture, which seems to bear resemblance to Salvator's paintings in all the essential features, may create confusion in a mind thoroughly saturated with Salvatorial landscape, that Sir William was drawing upon Rosa. But it is a mere coincidence. Sir William was really drawing upon his own store-house of personal thrills and sensations which he had experienced amid the Chinese mountains. Mr. Laurence Binyon has claimed the superiority of Eastern landscape- 'It is in landscape, and the themes allied to landscape, that the art of the East is superior to our own.' (1) Eastern themes dwell upon those thoughts that lead men out from themselves into the universal life, hints of the infinite, whispers from Nature- mountains, waters, mists, flowering trees - whatever suggest presences more powerful than men. The essential features of Chinese landscape-art as summarised by Mr. Binyon may be quoted below-

'We enter into this enchanted world and are played upon by every mood of Nature. Now the sun-light steeps the distance, and soft ripples break at our feet ; now we are

(1) Laurence Binyon, Painting in the Far East, 4th ed., p.25.

climbing dizzy paths, the immense crags tower menacing above us ; we are shut within the walls of a ravine ; we are liberated with the opening glimpse of wide horizons ; sails gleam on winding waters ; villages sleep under the hills ; reeds tremble in the mist ; tall pines drink the sun - it is a world in which, once entered, we can wander for ever and find new springs of delight.' (1)

The Chinese term for landscape is 'mountain-and-water picture', indicating the ingredients of which it is composed. The Chinese love of mountain-scenery finds parallel in the dawning sense of admiration for mountains in eighteenth century England. In our discussion of the 'picturesque' poets we have seen that Salvator Rosa was one of the important factors which stimulated a taste for mountains. The Chinese landscape imported into England by Sir William Chambers added fresh stimulus to this taste. The Chinese did not look upon mountains as savage and forbidding . The mountain inspired in them a serene mood of joy. During the Sung period in China (960- 1280), which is marked by splendour in art and literature, there was no feeling of dread in the Chinese artist's attitude towards wild Nature- 'nothing of the horror of mountains which survived nearly a century ago in Europe.' (2) We shall see in our treatment of the minor poets (Chapter VIII) how the laureate-poet William Whitehead appealed ^{to} the nation to 'accept the imported boon ' from China. China provided new ideals and enthusiasms for the appreciation of landscape.

(1) Laurence Binyon, Painting in the Far East, 4th. ed., pp. 155-156.

(2) Ibid.

Sir William was so much obsessed by fantastic ideas in his eagerness to produce pleasing irregularity that he was carried to ^{incredible} ~~incredible~~ extravagances which provoked William Mason's poem, Heroical Epistle to Sir William Chambers (1773). Addressing Sir William as 'the cynosure of British taste', Mason ridicules his taste for Chinese pagodas and Oriental bowers -

'Let barbaric glories feast his eyes,
August pagodas round his palace rise.'

The 'garden of idea' producing feelings and emotions has not escaped Mason's sneer-

'Now to our lawns of dalliance and delight,
Join we the groves of horror and affright;
Whatever can please, or frighten or surprise.'

In his prose Preface to the Heroical Epistle, Mason challenged Sir William's contention that 'European artists must not hope to rival Oriental splendour' by saying that they may easily rival it. Horace Walpole in his valuable notes to Mason's Preface supports Mason against Chambers and claims absolute originality for the English garden-

'The imitation of Nature in gardens is original and indisputably English. It is as much ours as Tragedy and Comedy of Grecian growth.' (1)

Horace Walpole holds that both French and Chinese gardens artfully avoid Nature- the French by their formality and the Chinese by their irregularity and extravagance. The English garden is distinguished from both by its avoidance of wandering away from Nature. The favourable reception of the Heroical Epistle encouraged Mason to write An Heroic Postscript deriding the corruption of true taste.

(1) Horace Walpole, Notes on Satirical Poems published anonymously by William Mason, { Ed. by Paget Toynbee, Oxford : 1926).

The Chinese vogue in the eighteenth century was so great that besides Mason's gibes, there ^{were} many others' satires. The World and the Connoisseur contain many satirical hits against the Chinese taste. As Chinese and Gothic tastes were marked by riotous extravagances, these satires are directed against the two tastes coupled together. Richard Owen Cambridge in the World (No.76) after discussing the changes of style in gardening, tells us how the owner of the new style of garden takes his visitor 'through all the pleasures of unconnected variety, with this recommendation, that it is but a little way from the Palladian portico to the Gothic tower ; from the Lapland to the Chinese house.

In spite of all the extravagances of Chinese taste, the impulse that came from China was on the whole beneficial to the Western world. Europeans found in Chinese painting and gardening what they were fumbling for- 'painting a landscape of idea.' The English, however, should have the honour among the European nations for the discovery of Chinese taste. Richard Owen Cambridge refers to the pioneering activity of the English in this direction in the World (No. 118. 1756)- 'We are the first of the Europeans who have found their (of the Chinese) taste.' Sir William Chambers's theories had far-reaching influence in England, and far more, on the continent. Modern rustic summer-house is the direct descendant of Chambers's ruins, grotto and temple. Chambers's singular achievement in appreciating and engrafting sound Oriental taste upon the Western world bears testimony to the ready responsiveness of the

Western mind to the aesthetic and emotional appeal of the East. Mr. Laurence Binyon has paid glowing tribute to the imagination and aesthetic sense of the Chinese → 'Of all the nations of the East, the Chinese is that which through all its history has shown the strongest aesthetic instinct, the fullest and richest imagination.' (1) Mr. Herbert Read has also expressed a similar sentiment- 'No other country in the world can display such a wealth of artistic activity and no other country, all things considered, has anything to equal the highest attainments of art.' (2)

Chinese influence is seen in the journals, letters and tales of the eighteenth century. In the Public Ledger (1760) Goldsmith contributed his famous series of Chinese letters afterwards collected and published under the general title of The Citizen of the World. Although these writings do not relate to taste, yet their popularity shows the Chinese vogue of the time. The idea of supposing a Chinaman to record his various observations of London was initiated by Horace Walpole who three years before had published a letter from Xo Ho, a Chinese philosopher at London, to his friend Lien Chi at Peking. He signed one of his letters to Sir Horace Mann as 'Xo Ho' and concludes it- 'You will excuse the brevity of my English letter in consideration of my Chinese one.' (3) Addison had also used the same method in the Spectator.

Bishop Percy and Bishop Hurd, whose names find a prominent place in the history of Gothic taste, were also influenced by the Chinese taste. In 1761, Percy translated

(1) Laurence Binyon, Painting in the Far East (London: 1924) 4th ed., p.7

(2) Herbert Read, Meaning of Art, p.60.

(3) Horace Walpole, Letters, Toynbee, Vol.IV, p.55.

from the Portuguese a Chinese romance called Hau Kiou Chooan. In 1762, he brought out anonymously Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese to which Bishop ^{Hurd} contributed his Discourse on Poetical Imitation. Percy's Miscellaneous Pieces familiarised the English reader with famous Chinese proverbs. In another anonymous work called Matrons (1762) Percy narrated the history of a Chinese widow.

Bishop Hurd in his Discourse on Poetical Imitation makes some illuminating critical comments on the Chinese drama -

'The state of poetry among the Chinese is very imperfect. Their essays in this way are, for the most part, little slight pieces, not unlike the songs and madrigals and sonnets of our European poets. But though they seem not to have studied poetry, as an art, or have brought the greater species of it to perfection, yet the innate love of contemplating human life in the mirror of scenical representation would not suffer them to be wholly ignorant of the drama.'

Hurd then proceeds to discover the rules of Chinese dramatic construction and finds resemblances to the Greek drama. He maintained that the Chinese poet was 'not unacquainted with what is most essential to dramatic method.' He compares one notable Chinese ~~Chinese~~ drama The Orphan of the House of Chao with Electra. He notes the coincidences between the Grecian and Chinese models in theme, unity of action and rapidity of action.

Side by side with the Chinese taste there existed a taste for the Oriental Tale and Allegory which are found in plenty in the periodicals of the eighteenth century. Dr. Johnson came under the potent spell of Orientalism and gave expression to it in his Rasselas and in some papers of the Rambler and the Idler. Addison also came under the same influence which is seen in his fine allegory of the 'Vision of Mirza.'

The Orientalising tendency culminated in Beckford's Vathek which is full of gorgeous Eastern colour and marked by a gloomy atmosphere. Its first anonymous English version appeared in 1786 and it appealed to those who had a taste for Oriental literature. No one was more rapturous in his admiration of Vathek than Lord Byron. He was attracted partly by its sensuous Orientalism, and partly by its portrayal of the struggle of a fierce and ungovernable nature. It struck a responsive echo in his mind. In his notes to Giaour (1813) Byron acknowledged his indebtedness to Vathek and paid a glowing tribute to it-

'For correctness of costume, beauty of description, and power of imagination, it far surpasses all European imitations : and bears such marks of originality, that those who have visited the East will find ~~some~~ difficulty in believing it to be more than a translation.'

In his notes The Siege of Corinth Byron acknowledged that the suggestion of certain lines (sec. xxi, ll.81-86) came from Vathek, which he 'never recurred to or read without renewal of gratification.' Apart from its influence on Byron, Vathek made a deep impression on the reading public with its scenes of terror and magnificence, such as, the eye of Vathek killing with a glance, or the burning hearts of the doomed in the Hall of Eblis.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Letters also give us descriptions of the splendour and magnificence of the East. Her descriptions are not over-wrought like Beckford's. She was impressed by the beauty of foreign landscape. She noted the picturesque effect of Oriental costumes. Her Turkish Letters (May 1716 - November 1718) are marked by much more finish and originality than her Constantinople

Letters (1763). Her descriptions of Turkish manners helped to remove the prejudices from the English mind. She had a keen eye for the most effective features of a foreign country. She has vividly described the gilded ceilings, the panels of cedar studded with silver or jewelled nails, table services of massive gold set with most precious stones, and dresses encrusted with gold thread and gems.

The name of Sir William Jones stands very high in the history of Oriental taste in the eighteenth century. His skilful translations opened the treasures of some of the best Asiatic classics to the Western world. Of the six monumental volumes of his works published by Lord Teignmouth, the first volume contains his literary and eminently readable Discourses on the Chinese, the Hindus, the Tartars, the Arabs, the Persians and the Borderers, Highlanders and Mountaineers of Asia. His translation of Vishnuvarman's Hitopadesa brought the English into contact with the ethical system of the Hindus. Sir William Jones characterised this work 'as the most beautiful collection of apologues in the world'. The English reader was also familiarised with the most famous ~~famous~~ Sanskrit drama, Sakuntala, the masterpiece of Kalidasa, breathing the fragrance of Nature and Romance. Sir William's verse-renderings of some exquisite Chinese Odes give a glimpse into Chinese natural scenery-

'See, where yon crag's imperious height
The funny highlands crowns,
And hedious as the brow of night,
Above the torrent frowns. ' (1)

Sir William Jones's works are one of the main channels through which the recognition of the East was drifting

(1) Sir William Jones, translation of a Chinese ode
(Works, ed. by Lord Teignmouth, Vol.I)

towards the end of the eighteenth century. The historian Robertson was influenced by his writings and he ^{quotes} ~~cites~~ from Jones's translation of the Sakuntala. In 1791 Robertson produced a brief monograph, A Historical Disquisition Concerning the Knowledge Which the Ancients had of India, a work which bears testimony to the pervasive influence of Jones's writings. (1)

We may sum up our discussion of Gothic and Chinese tastes by pointing out some remarkable points of similarity between these two kinds of art. Profusion of ornaments and a complexity of design are common features of both Chinese and Gothic arts. Both try to produce emotional effect. Both are marked by vagueness and suggestiveness. Both may be contrasted with Greek art which is clear in outline and unemotional in character. Both have warmth of life and buoyancy of movement as distinguished from the cold and statuesque character of classical art. These numerous points of resemblance between Gothic and Chinese arts are not accidental. They may be due to a common origin. Mr. Herbert Read has pointed out that Gothic art grew out of Romanesque Art which in itself was an adaptation of the elements of the ancient Eastern art. Gothic and Chinese both belong to the religious type of art. (2)

(1) Prof. Oliver Elton, Survey of English Literature.

(2) Herbert Read, Meaning of Art, p.70.

Mr. Read gives a concrete example of the similarity between Gothic Art and Chinese Buddhist Art- 'The figure of the Chinese Lohan in the British Museum and the figure found in a Gothic Cathedral must be related to the same sensibility.'- Ibid, p.31.

Whatever may be the cause of the extraordinary similarity between Gothic and Chinese arts, both kinds of taste were closely associated in the minds of men as effective contrasts to the classical taste. If they wanted relief from classical order and harmony they turned to Gothic and Chinese arts in search of the wayward, the bizarre and the fantastic. Like the Middle Ages, the far-off unknown region of China was clothed with the glamour of Romance. Chinese Art satisfied the sense of mystery and of admiration of the far-away.

We have seen that the art of China had its own laws of cohesion, order and solidarity. The Gothic Art is also marked by a feeling for harmony and rhythm. But these features were lost sight of in the desire to find out pleasing variety and irregularity. Hence the Gothic Revival became a sentimental freak in the hands of Horace Walpole and the Chinese taste was reduced to caprice by Sir William Chambers. The gimcracks in Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill, Chambers's Chinese pagoda at Kew and Nash's Indian pavilion at Brighton - all show the desire of the age for novelty. The imitators were following the superficial features of Gothic, Chinese and Indian tastes, without having an eye on their true principles of design and construction. The sentimental view of the Middle Ages taken by Horace Walpole in his Castle of Otranto is also attributable to the same cause. But these sentimental freaks gradually assumed a serious character. The pretty little absurdities introduced into Strawberry Hill and into Kew Gardens contained in

CHAPTER VI

them germs of a new principle - the principle of freedom from classical formula in gardening and architecture. Landscape-gardening which became increasingly popular in this age received a stimulus from the Chinese ideals of Sir William Chambers. The Chinese taste was gradually fused with the other tastes of this period, and this fusion was most prominent in landscape-gardening. The landscape-gardens of the eighteenth century were reproductions of the canvases of Claude and Salvator, and the Chinese touches added fresh picturesqueness to these gardens. It will be our endeavour in the next two chapters to note the development of the ideas of landscape-gardening.

Charles II. was influenced by the extravagance of Louis XIV., and beautiful fountains and white marble sculptures were in vogue. With the reign of William and Mary, a new influence enjoyed brief popularity with extensive use of mountains and water. Alterations on the Dutch model were made in Hampton Court and Westbury Court on the Severn. Early refers to Dutch ornamentation in gardening in the early years of the century - 'The laying out and planting of the garden (viz. West in Yorkshire) as ornamental gardens is probably Dutch rather than Italian, having regard to the time of such planting about 1690-1705'. (1) The Dutch style is marked by quaintness and exaggeration and the great gardens of Westmoreland were laid out on the Dutch principle. The Dutch principle undoubtedly introduced a change in public taste. But it was the last satisfaction of a passing tradition; a revolution was at hand. (2)

(1) Squerry, 'Moor and its Traditions' quoted by G. E. Fryer, 'Pippin, English Names, Part IV' (late Stuart, 1640-1714), p. 202.
 (2) Henry J. Ford and Charles Fry, 'Moor and its Traditions' (London, 1912), Ch. IV.

CHAPTER VI

TASTE FOR LANDSCAPE-GARDENING IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

The interest in gardening in the seventeenth century was mostly practical, and never picturesque. Evelyn took pleasure in extended prospects and Sir William Temple considered garden as an enclosure. Besides, in the seventeenth century the principle of gardening was that everything should be square and geometrical in form, and the country-gentlemen followed the fashion. During the Civil Wars the Puritans destroyed the gardens. With the Restoration, French fashion began to dominate English Taste. Charles II. was influenced by the extravagance of Louis XIV, and beautiful fountains and white marble sculpture came into vogue. With the reign of William and Mary, a Dutch influence enjoyed brief popularity with extensive use of fountains and water. Alterations on the Dutch model were made in Hampton Court and Westbury Court on the Severn. Squarey refers to Dutch ornamentation in gardening in the opening years of the century - 'The laying out and planting of this site (i.e. Moot in Wiltshire) as ornamental gardens is probably Dutch rather than Italian, having regard to the date of such planting about 1690-1705'. (1) The Dutch style is marked by quaintness and exaggeration and the quaint gardens of Westmoreland were laid out on the Dutch principle. The Dutch principle undoubtedly introduced a change in public taste. But it 'was the last manifestation of a waning tradition; a revolution was at hand.' (2)

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- (1) Squarey, 'Moot and Its Traditions' quoted by H. Avray Tipping, English Homes, Part IV (late Stuart, 1649-1714), p. 382.
- (2) Harry Batsford and Charles Fry, Homes and Gardens of England, 1932, Ch. iv.

The revolution consisted in the introduction of a pictorial element in the importation of ideas derived from Italian landscape-painting into gardening. William Kent (1684-1748), painter and architect is the founder of the landscape-school of gardening. Christopher Hussey, (2) however, gives the credit of the innovation to Kent's predecessor Vanbrugh - 'It was Vanbrugh who first conceived the approximation of gardens to ^(a) painted landscape, with lakes, vistas, temples and woods, worked into a composed whole.' Vanbrugh, on being consulted in the matter of the laying-out of a garden, said - 'You must send for a landscape-painter'. This indicates that he had picturesque and romantic ideas about gardens, but his actual influence was not so great as that of Kent.

Upon the testimony of Horace Walpole, Bridgeman is another early exponent of the landscape-school. He introduced the 'Ha-ha' or sunk fence, expressing the delightful surprise of finding one's path impeded by an obstacle. Bridgeman's 'Ha-ha' was taken up by Kent for the creation of extended prospects, for which a new taste had set in. Horace Walpole calls Kent 'the father of modern gardening' and vindicates Kent's position as inventor of the natural style of gardening in the following rapturous accents - 'At that moment appeared Kent, painter enough to taste the charms of landscape, bold and opinionative enough to dare to dictate, and born with a genius to strike out a great system from the twilight of imperfect essays. He leaped the fence, and saw all Nature was a garden. He felt the delicious contrast of hill and valley, changing

(2) Christopher Hussey, The Picturesque, 1927, p.128.

imperceptibly into each other, tasted the beauty of the gentle swell, or concave scoop, and remarked how loose groves crowned an easy eminence with happy ornament. The great principles on which he worked were perspective, light and shade'. (1) These significant words of Horace Walpole indicates the influence on Kent of Claude's and Salvator's paintings, with temples and garden-buildings, wooded hills and valleys dammed into a series of lakes. Kent had in his collection some paintings of Salvator and Gaspar Poussin. In order to emphasise the connection between garden and painting and also to heighten the Salvatorial impression, Kent planted dead trees, which are a common feature of Salvator's landscapes, in the Kensington and Carlton Gardens, Kent's motto was 'Nature abhors a straight line', and he broke symmetry by introducing clumps, twisting paths and winding water-ways.

In the early 1730's, landscape-gardening was mainly a hobby of the Burlingtonian aristocrats. The influence of Lord Burlington who was a generous patron of talents was very great in the development of gardening. In the mid-eighteenth century there was a mania for domestic buildings. To be provincial was the English fashion and a gentleman's life centred on his country-estate. A wealthy oligarchy ruled the land, not merely politically, but also intellectually and aesthetically. A cultured aristocracy, with whom knowledge of the arts, largely gathered by foreign travel, was a customary accomplishment,

(1) Horace Walpole, Anecdotes of Painting (Strawberry Hill Press edition; Vol IV. Ch. vii. (Chapter on Modern Gardening), pp. 137-138.

had purse and power, as well as the desire and capacity to realise the utmost dreams of ceremonial housing and splendid living. Palaces were to be provided for great landowners, millionaires and merchants. (1) In 1738, Dr. Johnson referred to this fashionable vogue for landscape-gardening -

'There mightst thou find some elegant retreat,
Some hireling senator's deserted seat;
And stretch thy prospects o'er the smiling land,
Then prune thy walks, support thy dropping flowers,
Direct thy rivulets, and twine thy bowers.'

Dr. Johnson is most probably alluding to the prospects and serpentine methods of William Kent. Under the influence of Lord Burlington, the Italian style called Palladianism was being practised by men like Kent, Gibbs, Campbell, Archer, Vardi and Leoni. Palladianism was a distant phase of the Late Renaissance style. Everyone who possessed a country-estate in England set himself to build or rebuild his house in the Italian manner, and to provide for himself a proper setting of porticos and balustrades and formal gardens with statuary and little temples cunningly disposed about them - All inspired by the gardens of the Italian villas. Lord Burlington was the best-known of these amateurs.

About the time when Sir Christopher Wren, the great classicist, retired from office, Lord Burlington and Kent returned from Italy. Artists began to group round Lord Burlington. He housed Kent in the Piccadilly Mansion, turned his attention from portraiture to architecture and the decorative arts and employed him in the Chiswick Villa and gardens. It is out of this Palladian phase that

(1) H. Avray Tipping, English Homes, (Period V, Early Georgian), Vol. I, P. xviii

(2) Dr. Johnson, London, II.

developed the art^{of} design and Kent became famous as a leading designer in decorations and furniture. Horace Walpole's testimony may be cited again - 'Kent had an excellent taste for ornaments. His style predominated authoritatively during his life; and his oracle was so much consulted by all who affected taste, that nothing was thought complete without his assistance.' Kent regarded Holkham in Norfolk, built for the house of Leicester, as his favourite production. His Hagley Park in Worcestershire, built for the house of Lord Lyttleton was a place of pilgrimage in the eighteenth century. Horace Walpole praised the Hagley Park in his letter (Sept., 1753) - 'I cannot describe the enchanting scenes of the Park it is a three miles, but broke with all manner of beauty; such lawns, such woods, rills, cascades, and a thickness of verdure quife to the summit of the hill.' In the Doric columns of Hagley Park, Kent shows the traces of 'Athenian' Stuart's influence. He also built the Houghton Hall in Norfolk for Sir Robert Walpole. Horace Walpole attributes the comparative insolvency of his father on his death to the vast sums expended on the Houghton. This is only one instance out of many of the losses of fortune due to this extraordinary passion for garden-building in the eighteenth century. Miss Pelham's fete at Esher is regarded by some critics as 'Kent's garden-masterpiece'. Horace Walpole praises this garden in his letter (May 19th, 1763) - 'The day was delightful, the scene transporting, the trees, lawns, concaves, all in the perfection in which the ghost of Kent would joy to see them.' Kent occasionally dabbled in

Gothic and he introduced the Gothic style in the ceilings. This was but an occasional phase in him, but it illustrates how, in the middle years of the eighteenth century, various styles, like the French, the Chinese, the Gothic and other eccentricities were jostling against each other.

The influence of Addison and Pope was very great in the history of eighteenth century gardening. They were the most influential of the literary advocates of the great reaction from the absurdities and excesses of formal gardening to the awakening to the beauty and value of a natural rural landscape. Addison was an opponent of the formal and artificial garden, and a champion of free, open prospects. He was attracted by the account of ^{the} Chinese garden, with its pleasing want of symmetry, and praises it in depreciation of the contemporary formal garden in the Spectator, (No. 414) -

'Writers ^{who} have given us an account of China, tell us ^{that} the inhabitants of that country laugh at the plantations of our Europeans, which are laid out by the rule and line.... They choose rather to show a genius in works of this nature, and therefore always conceal the art by which they direct themselves.... Our British gardeners, on the contrary, instead of humouring Nature, love to deviate from it as much as possible. Our trees rise in cones, globes and pyramids. We see the marks of the scissors upon every plant and bush.... I would rather look upon a tree in all its luxuriance and diffusion of boughs and branches, than when it is thus cut and trimmed into a mathematical figure; and I cannot but fancy that an orchard in flower looks infinitely more delightful than all the little labyrinths of the most finished parterre.' (1)

In The Spectator No. 412 again, Addison gives expression to his romantic admiration for novelty and variety -

(1) Addison, Works, ed. by Bishop Hurd, Vol. III, p. 405. @ 405-406

'Groves, fields and meadows, are at any season of the year pleasant to look upon, but never so much as in the opening of the spring, when they are all new and fresh with their first gloss upon them, and not yet too much accustomed and familiar to the eye. For this reason, there is nothing that more enlivens a prospect than rivers, jetteaus, or falls of water, where the scene is perpetually shifting, and entertaining the sight every moment with something that is new.' (1)

In Spectator No. 477, he tells us that gardening is 'one of the most innocent delights in human life.' In this essay he lets us into the secret of his own garden which was -

'a confusion of kitchen and parterre, orchard and flower-garden' which would appear to the eye of a foreigner as 'a natural wilderness.'

His plantations were marked by the same irregularity, striking the eye as 'natural wilderness! All these passages illustrate how Addison's ideas about gardening were romantic and picturesque, and how they harmonised with the ideas of Kent and Pope.

Addison was fond of borrowing metaphors from gardening. In Spectator No. 417 he contrasts the Iliad with the Aeneid by means of metaphors -

'Reading the Iliad is like travelling through the country uninhabited, where the fancy is entertained with a thousand savage prospects of vast deserts, wild uncultivated marshes, huge forests, misshapen rocks and precipices. On the contrary, the Aeneid is like a well-ordered garden, where ~~it~~ it is impossible to find out any part unadorned, or to cast our eyes upon a single spot that does not produce some beautiful plant or flower.'

Pope, in his Homeric criticism, took a hint from Addison's essay and improved upon it by distinguishing between 'natural' and 'regular' gardens. Homer's work is a 'wild Paradise' not 'an ordered garden'. It is

(1) Addison, Works, ed. by Bishop Hurd, Vol. III, p.398.

like a 'copious nursery, which contains the seeds and first productions of every kind, out of which those whom followed him have but selected some particular plants, each according to his fancy, to cultivate and beautify.'

Though the friendships between Pope and Addison cooled, and though the celebrated character of Atticus has survived all the more favourable comment, Pope paid compliment to Addison as reformer of taste.

The part played by Pope himself in popularising the ideas of picturesque-gardening was not inconsiderable. He exercised his influence through his poems, through his interest in gardens and through his connection with Kent. Pope's intimacy with Kent has made critics come to different conclusions as to which of them influenced the other. Some critics hold that Kent followed the principles laid down by Pope in his Epistle to the Earl of Burlington, (1731) and ~~followed~~ illustrated in his own garden at Twickenham. (1) But Pope's recent biographer, Mr. George Sherburn says - "These peers and gardeners (Lord Burlington and Kent) form the environment in which Pope worked; whether they influenced him more than he them is possibly doubtful. In his own application of their principles to his grounds at Twickenham, Pope was forced, above all, to consult the 'genius of the place'" (2) Pope gave expression to his 'Picturesque' views on gardening in his Epistle to Lord Burlington in the following famous lines -

'Consult the Genius of the Place in all,
That tells the Waters or to rise, or to fall;
Or help the ambitious Hill the heavens to scale,
Or scoop in circling theatres the Vale;

(1) Pope, John / Essays / Early / The Use of Rhetoric
VI / 57-64 / Dictionary of National Biography, (Art. on Kent).

(2) Ibid. / VI / 113-122 / Mr. Geo^{ry} Sherburn, The Early
Career of Alexander Pope, (Oxford : 1934), p.282
 Kent).

Calls in the country, catches opening glades,
Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;
Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending Lines;
Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.'

(1)

Like Kent, Pope had ^{an} antipathy to straight lines, and like Addison, he was a champion of wild irregularity. In the following oft-quoted description of 'Timon's Villa', Pope had his fling at the artificial taste in gardening -

'No pleasing intricacies intervene,
No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
Grove nods at grove, each Alley has a brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other,
The suff'ring eye inverted Nature sees,
Trees cut to Statues, Statues thick as trees;
With here a fountain, never to be play'd;
And there a Summer-house, that knows no shade.'

(2)

Pope succeeded in his application of these principles of gardening to his own Twickenham with its famous grotto. Carping critics would say that it shows 'slight trace of pleasing intricacies, and if grove does not nod at grove, mound faces mound.' (3) The garden-house was not impressive, but the garden itself was invested 'with romance'. Its neighbourhood was rich in beauty and its convenient proximity to Richmond Park and Hampton Court was of no small importance. Mr. Sherburn gives a succinct but vivid account of the surroundings of the garden at Twickenham - 'It faced the Thames, and being situated on a bend of the river, commanded a fine view of both stream and down. Between the river and the house was an unadorned lawn, - floods made any 'gay parterre' impracticable on the front. Close behind the house ran the high road from Hampton Court to London, and on the upper side of this road lay the fine acres that were to be Pope's gardens. From this division of the 'estate' came as a convenience the passage under the

(1) Pope, Moral Essays, Epistle IV (Of the Use of Riches), ll. 57-64

(2) Ibid, ll. 115-122

(3) Miss Manwaring, Op.cit., p.128

road, which Pope called his 'grotto'. This grotto was really a tunnel underneath the turn-pike road which divided the two parts of the garden. It is interesting to read in this connection Pope's own lines On His Grotto at Twickenham composed of marbles, spars, gems, ores and minerals -

'Thou who shalt stop, where Thames' translucent
wave
Shines a broad Mirror thro' the shadowy Cave;
Where ling'ring drops from min'ral Roofs distill,
And pointed Crystals break the sparkling Rill,
Unpolish'd Gems no ray on Pride bestow,
And latent Metals innocently glow:
Approach! Great Nature studiously behold;
And eye the Mine without a wish for Gold.' (1)

Pope's celebrated grotto with its sparry marbles and crystal set the fashion to similar artificialities. Pope had removed from Chiswick to Twickenham in 1719 and the grotto was ready for visitors in the summer of 1722, The garden was his constant care and the grotto was his pride. The grotto, in later years, became a sort of geological museum, with its growing accumulation of eccentric ornaments, shells, spars and what Dr. Johnson calls 'fossil bodies' and many other natural curiosities. He made it a curious blend of the natural, the rough, the artificial that his taste had evolved. According to Miss Sitwell, Pope found in this retreat 'a symbol of romance', a refuge from his misery and his thwarted Romanticism, but she overlooked the fact that Pope's disconsolate spirit did not always find joy in this retreat. Pope in his Lines to Gay refers to his own garden -

(1) Pope, Works (Globe ed.), p.487.

'In vain my structures rise, my gardens grow;
 In vain fair Thames reflects the double scenes
 Of hanging mountains, and of sloping greens:
 Joy lives not here - to happier seats it flies -
 And only dwells where Wortley casts her eyes,
 What are the gay parterre, the chequer'd shade,
 The morning bower, the evening colonnade,
 But soft recesses of uneasy minds,
 To sigh, unheard in, to the passing winds?' (1)

This expression of an 'uneasy mind' is most probably hollow and affected, because Pope liked to revel in a disconsolate mood. Therefore, this passage does not give Pope's real view on gardening; - his own garden was to him far more than a 'soft recess'; - it was a source of self-expression and joy. Pope's passion for gardening enabled him to make Twickenham an ideal garden of moderate size and he soon gained high reputation as a gardener. Distinguished persons like Bolingbroke and the Bishop of Rochester were constant visitors at Twickenham. Pope was requested by friends to assist them in their gardens. He helped his friend Lord Bathurst in the laying-out and embellishment of the extensive woodlands at Cirencester, in which 'Pope's Seat' is a notable architectural feature. He was consulted about the gardens of the Prince of Wales at Richmond Lodge which, according to Horace Walpole, imitated Pope's grotto. He was also consulted ^{about} ~~for~~ the villa of Marble Hill erected for the Countess of Suffolk in Twickenham. He advised the Earl of Oxford on the improvement of Down Hill. Traces of imitation of Pope's garden are found in Carlton House and at Rousham, both made by Kent.

[1] Pope, Sonnet to Mr. Gay, (Pope's Works, Globe ed., p.488)

Pope was not an out-and-out town-poet. He had a genuine love for country-scenes, as well as for London. His gardening and his letters both indicate an unsophisticated love of landscape. Like Bridgeman and Kent, Pope held that 'all gardening is landscape-painting'. His love of quiet scenes breaks out in his Pastorals - (1)

'Where'er you walk, cool glades shall fan the glade,
Trees, where you sit, shall crowd into a shade;
Where'er you tread, the blushing flowers shall rise,
And all things flourish where you turn your eyes.'

Professor Mackail finds in these lines of fine phrasing and elastic rhythm accents of a new poetical voice, showing a movement towards the Romantic Revolution, and his remarks may with equal justice be applied to much of the garden-poetry of the period. (2) There are many other exquisite touches of garden-scene scattered here and there in the Pastorals and these descriptions are all full of fervour and fine poetry -

'Eternal beauties grace the shining scene,
Fields ever fresh, and groves ever green!
There while you rest in Amaranthine bowers,
Or from the meads select unfading flowers' (3)

'Now rise, and haste to yonder woodbine bow'rs,
A soft retreat from sudden vernal show'rs,
The turf with rural dainties shall be crowned,
While opening blooms diffuse their sweets around.' (4)

Pope was influenced by the idea of the picturesque, the development of which is one of the notable achievements of the eighteenth century. The poet's 'touching and child-like enthusiasm for the rustic beauties' enabled him to become a successful gardener. Some of his principles of gardening are embodied in his Epistle On the Use of Riches, (1732). These Epistles are, in the opinion of a competent critic, 'the final and crowning effort of the poet's genius'. Epistle IV is particularly noteworthy as con-

(1) De Pope, Second Pastoral, Summer, ll. 73-76.

(2) Prof. J. W. Mackail, Studies of Eng. Poets, (1926) p. 61

(3) Pope, Fourth Pastoral, Winter, ll. 71-74.

(4) Pope, First Pastoral, Spring, ll. 97-100

taining Pope's views on false taste in the expenditure of wealth. In the description of 'Timon's villa', already quoted, Pope satirised the false taste for magnificence. In another passage in the same Epistle, Pope refers to the gardens at Stowe in Buckinghamshire. -

'Still follow Sense, of ev'ry Art the Soul,
Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole,
Spontaneous beauties all around advance,
Start even from Difficulty, strike from Chance;
Nature shall join you; Time shall make it grow
A work to wonder at - perhaps a Stowe.' (2)

According to professional authorities on gardening, this picture of Stowe is not the true one. 'Stowe was a real achievement in garden-design - with its sweeping extent, and exquisite grouping, calm waters and delightful vistas'. (3) Like Holkham and Houghton, Stowe was an instance of the Palladian phase. Pope was an enemy of Palladianism and there are other instances of his attack against this style so much favoured by Burlington and Kent. Lord Burlington who was then publishing the designs of Inigo Jones and the *Antiquities of Rome* by Palladio, is addressed in Epistle IV in the following lines -

'You show us, Rome was glorious, not profuse,
And pompous buildings once were things of use.
Yet shall, my Lord, your just, your noble rules
Fill half the land with Imitating Fools.
Conscious they act a true Palladian part
And, if they starve, they starve by rules of art.' (4)

Pope then points out that 'Good Sense which only is the gift of Heaven' is far 'more needful than expense' and that it is 'something previous even to Taste'. This Good Sense is -

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- (1) Dennis, *Age of Pope*, p.55.
 - (2) Pope, *Moral Essays*, Epistle IV, 11.65-70.
 - (3) Harry Batford and Charles Fry, *Homes and Gardens of England*, (1932), Ch. IV.
 - (4) Pope *Moral Essays*, Epistle IV, 11. 23-26, 36-37.

'A Light, which in yourself you must perceive;
Jones and Le Notre have it not to give.' (1)

Pope's reference to Inigo Jones, 'the English Palladio', and to Le Notre, the favourite landscape-gardener of Louis XIV, is very appropriate in his treatment of Taste. Le Notre introduced into France the taste for 'jardins anglais'. From the point of view of the critic of architecture, Pope was rather unduly severe on the monuments of his period, because Palladian great house represents a national type in the development of English architecture. In his enthusiasm for Naturalism in gardening, Pope condemned all rules of art. In his Preface to the Iliad, (1715-1720), he gives Nature a higher place than Art -

'Art is only like a prudent steward that lives on managing the riches of Nature. Whatever praises may be given to works of judgment, there is not even a single beauty in them but is owing to the invention, as in the most regular gardens; however art may carry the greatest appearance, there is not a plant or flower but is the gift of Nature.'

Pope laid down his own principles of Naturalism in gardening in the following lines -

'To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
To rear the Column, or the Arch to bend,
To swell the Terrace, or to sink the Grot;
In all, let Nature never be forgot.
But treat the goddess like a modest fair,
Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare;
Let not each beauty everywhere be spy'd,
Where half the skill is decently to hide,
He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds,
Surprises, varies, and conceals the Bounds.' (2)

We shall see in the next Chapter how these ideas of ^{pleasing} ~~planning~~ confusion, surprise and variety influenced Mason and the landscape-gardeners of the age.

(1) Ibid, ll. 45-46

(2) Ibid, ll. 47-56

CHAPTER VII

TASTE FOR LANDSCAPE-GARDENING IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

(II)

The ideas of pleasing confusion, surprise and variety advocated by Pope, Kent and Addison were carried to the extreme by Capability Brown whose influence was supreme on landscape-gardening from 1750 to 1783. He improved peoples' parks and made them picturesque. He rigidly followed Kent by avoiding the 'straight line'. He was influenced by the paintings of Claude as well as by the rules of Burke and Hogarth. The latter he followed by forming all his works, lakes and belts of trees in serpentine lines, and by giving modulations to the surface of grounds. In doing this, Brown was following Burke's principle - 'The effect of a rugged and broken surface seems stronger than where it is smooth and polished.' (1) Being an extreme exponent of the landscape-school, Brown carried this method beyond logical limits by a too rigid adherence to maxims and mannerisms. Besides, in his eagerness to apply the new ideas of landscape-gardening to the country-places of England, he often destroyed formal gardens of great beauty owing to the zeal of unbalanced reaction.

Brown's name is associated with that of Sir William Chambers, the author of The Dissertation on Oriental Gardening (1772) which was inspired by his jealousy of Brown. He severely castigated the absurdities of the

(1) Burke, Sublime and the Beautiful, (Burke's Works, London : Rivington : 1801, Vol. I, p.171

ultra-landscape-school. As a boy, Chambers had been to China, and he introduced Chinese methods in his laying-out of the gardens at Kew. In his condemnation of formality, he belonged to the same school as Brown whose methods he condemned as insipid. He tried to make an English garden like a Chinese 'garden of idea', arousing passions and emotions, and, in his efforts to do so, he himself was led to far more incredible extravagances than Brown.

Then came William Mason with his criticism of both Brown and Chambers. Mason's criticism of Sir William Chambers has been discussed already in connection with the Chinese taste. Here we shall concentrate on his English Garden, a poem in four books, published in 1772, 1777, 1779 and 1782 respectively. Horace Walpole, in his valuable notes to Mason's poem, throws a flood of light on contemporary taste -

'In this poem, Mason has laid down rules not only for exercising taste, but for preserving it in its purity. Like Aristotle and Longinus, he has formed a system from the examples of the greatest masters; and by his superior felicity of being a poet and painter too, he has illustrated the beauties of the third, the youngest sister, by the assistance of the other two with such happy art Poetry, Painting and Gardening, or the science of landscape, will for ever by men of taste be deemed three sisters, or the 'Three New Graces' who grace and adorn Nature'. (1)

Mason was reckoned a great poet in his own day. The blend of classicism and sentimentality in him appealed to the taste of his contemporary, Thomas Warton, who praised The English Garden as a composition in which 'didactic poetry is brought to perfection by the happy combination of judicious precepts, with the most elegant ornaments

(1) Horace Walpole, Notes to Mason's Prose-Preface to the Heroic Epistle (Wm. Mason's Satirical Poems, edited by Dr. Paget Toynbee, Oxford, p.41)

of language and imagery'. (1) Gray also over-rated Mason's verses. In his opinion, Mason had 'much fancy, but little judgment'. (2) Professor Oliver Elton, admitting that Mason had a true feeling for scenery, characterises The English Garden 'as a long discursive affair in blank verse', reflecting contemporary taste for landscape-painting and landscape-gardening. (3) Professor Courthope also thinks that Mason was an admirable exponent of the prevailing taste - 'The growing refinement and material prosperity of the age, indicated by the widespread taste among the nobility for the arts of architecture, painting and landscape-gardening, encouraged the production of didactic poetry, in which Mason's qualifications made him to excel.' (4)

In the prose Preface to his poem, Mason refers to Pope's Epistle to Lord Burlington as the final word uttered in condemnation of false taste, and indicates that his own aim and object is to enlarge on those points which Pope had left unsaid. The First Book of his English Garden opens with an invocation to divine Simplicity who is the best arbitress of what is good and fair. He asks the goddess to repair to the woods, lawns and vales which lie in 'rude luxuriance'. Claiming to have a poet's feeling and a painter's eye, with which he was blessed at birth, he appeals to his countrymen to -

'Preserve the vestal purity of soul
Whence genuine taste proceeds.' (5)

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- (1) Warton quoted by Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVIII, p. 311
 (2) Edmund Gosse, Gray, p. 87.
 (3) Prof. O. Elton, Op.cit, Vol. II, p. 80
 (4) Prof. J.W. Courthope, History of Eng. Poetry, Vol. VI, p. 29
 (5) Mason, English Garden, Book 1 (Chalmers, XVIII, p. 379)

The art he is going to sing is not to be found in Greece
or Rome, but -

'Your eyes entranced
Shall catch those glowing scenes, that taught a Claude
To grace his canvas with Hesperian hues.' (1)

As great Nature scorns control, gardeners should 'mend
not change her features' -

'Does her hand
Stretch forth a level lawn? Ah, hope not thou
To lift the mountains there. Do mountains frown
Around? Ah, wish not there the level lawn.' (2)

If a painter comes in Mason's ideal garden, his art will
not go without a boon, for the natural scene with living
colours rivals Ruisdale -

'Chrystal lakes,
O'er which the giant oak, himself a grove,
Flings his romantic branches, and beholds
His reverend image in th' expanse below.' (3)

The want of background of distant hills may be compensated
by the eye resting on the foreground where

'varying forms and blending hues,
Gives that harmonious force of shade and light
Which makes the landscape perfect.' (4)

A gardener should be guided in his taste in the same way -

'As does the painter, and like him apply
Thy colours; plant thou on each separate part
Its proper foliage.' (5)

Mason gives some practical suggestions to the gardener in
the laying-out of winding pathways - how to conceal and
how to reveal the scene. He gives expression to his
enthusiastic admiration for the painters -

'O great Poussin! O Nature's darling, Claude!'

He refers to the savage dignity of Salvator's pencil and
gives him a place by the side of Shakespeare -

'Thou more than painter, more than poet! He,
Alone thy equal, who was "Fancy's child".'

(1) Mason, English Garden, Bk.I (Chalmers, Vol.XVIII), p.379

(2) Ibid, pp.379-380

(3) Ibid, p.380

(4) Ibid;

(5) Ibid.

Nature disdains the formal scene and loves to undulate and sport in a winding way; but with equal zest, she 'scorns the cube and cone'. A formal garden is a 'dull, disjointed scene'. Mason's long-drawn and laboured picture ~~picture~~ of a formal garden is prosaic beside Pope's few exquisite touches in the Epistle. Mason has written a complete poetical history of gardening, tracing as far back as Bacon, who first introduced the taste for ampler space in the lawn with green verdure. In Sir William Temple's perfect garden, one blade of grass is not be found, but he taught

'There is a grace in wild variety
Surpassing rule and order.'

Then comes Addison 'the polished sage' with his mild, gracious and brightening smiles. Pope next advances with bolder rage -

'his indignant arm
Waves the poetic brand o'er Timon's shades,
And lights them to destruction; the fierce blaze
Sweeps through each kindred vista; groves to groves
Nod their fraternal farewell and expire.'

Pope's famous passage has been very happily woven into these lines, but this picture is a bit over-wrought, inasmuch as in Pope's lines we do not feel the 'fierce blaze'; Rather do we feel the temperate glow. Mason mentions Kent as Pope's 'bold associate' who

'Worked with the living hues that Nature lent,
And realised his landscapes.'

Mason next refers to Philip Southcote, the first gentleman-landscape-gardener to win fame. He gave beauties to the humblest things and his simple farm eclipsed the garden's pride. Shenstone, the peaceful poet-gardener ~~knew~~ knew -

'to harmonise thy shades
Still softer than thy song.'

Tribute to the true genius of Capability Brown can be paid by the Muse alone.

In the Second Book of the English Garden, Mason protests against the Hogarthian theory of curvature, carried to the extreme by the gardeners. Taste has strayed into 'false extremes' and men are still unskilled to form the 'peculiar curve'. Nature is averse both 'to crooked and to straight' -

'Where sweet Simplicity resides, which Grace
And Beauty call their own; whose lambent flow
Charms us at once with symmetry and ease
'Tis Nature's curve.'

Like Pope, Mason repeatedly asks the gardener to consult 'the Genius of the Scene'. He refers to Gothic and Chinese tastes -

'The milk-white palisades, that Gothic now,
~~And~~ now Chinese, now neither, and yet both
Chequer their trim domain.'

At every step Mason borrows metaphors from painting to illustrate his principles of gardening. The Art of Gardening 'portrays the living landscape with varied hue' and 'commends the canvas plane to guide with streams'. In the Third Book, Mason lays down the principles of Taste and says that Grace -

'Is caught by strong perception, not from rules;
That undrest Nature claims for all her limbs
Some simple garb peculiar, which, however
Distinct their size and shape, is simple still:
This garb to choose, with clothing dense or thin,
A part to hide, another to adorn,
Is Taste's important task.' (1)

(1) Mason, English Garden, Bk.III, Chalmers, Vol. XVIII, p.390

Mason addresses gardeners as 'the sons of Claude'.

Nature's gift is glorious and the art of the gardener is only her menial handmaid. Book IV of the English Garden shows the relationship between architecture and gardening to country-life as it prevailed in the eighteenth century. This book has been called 'a romantic tragedy of landscape-gardening'. Here the poet gives up the didactic vein. The background of this book is a country-seat well-laid-out according to approved principles of taste. The youthful hero, Alcander, has inherited a fair domain from his father. He has reformed this estate by employing his own taste in its improvement. His rural seat commanded a view of the sea, and from the dell a rill ran down a grotto of conch-shells and spars. The following picture drawn by Mason reminds us of Pope's Twickenham with its proximity to the Thames and its grotto full of shining pebbles -

'here Art with ease
Might lead it o'er a grot, and filter'd there,
Teach it to sparkle down its craggy sides,
And fall and tinkle on the pebbled floor.
Here, then, that grot he builds, and conchs with spars
Moss petrified with branching corallines
In mingled mode arranges.'

Into the mouth of the tender maid, rescued by Alcander,
Mason has put some very good suggestions as to the improvement of the garden -

'Why, on these forest-features all-intent,
Forbears my friend some scent distinct to give
To Flora and her fragrance? Well I know
That in the general landscape's broad expanse
Their little blooms are lost; but here are glades,
Circled with shade, yet pervious to the sun,
Where, if enamell'd with their rainbow hues,
The eye would catch their splendour: turn thy Taste,
Even in the grassy circle where we stand,
To form their plots; there weave a woodbine bower,
And call that bower Nerina's.'

Mr. Hussey points out that this description corresponds to the conservatory at Stowe.

Hartley Coleridge says that Mason's English Garden is 'the production of a powerful mind in its maturest vigour. The topic itself is capable of discursive embellishments. It is not destitute of beauties, though dull'. (1) Mason was a man of varied accomplishments. Despite his skill in poetry and gardening, he was proficient in painting and an amateur in music. In 1783, he translated M. de Fresnoy's Art of Painting. In his Epistle to Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mason pays tribute to the genius of du Fresnoy -

'Those candid strictures, those reflections, new,
Refin'd by taste, yet still as Nature true.'

Mason is next to Dryden in his poetical rendering of Du Fresnoy. Mason's translation was a worthy contribution to the literature of taste. He discusses the widespread influence of du Fresnoy in his prose-Preface to the translation -

'The poem of M. de Fresnoy, when considered as a treatise on Painting may unquestionably claim the merit of giving the leading principles of the art with more precision, consiseness and accuracy, than any other work of the kind that has either preceded or followed it; yet as it was published about the middle of the seventeenth century, many of the precepts it contains have been so frequently repeated by later writers, that they have lost the air of novelty....Nobody should ever read du Fresnoy but either to be instructed by him as a painter, or improved as a Virtuoso'. (2)

Mason himself had the gift of a painter to translate with understanding the precepts of du Fresnoy. His English Garden gave an impetus to the tendency to combine the principles of poetry, painting and gardening.

(1) Hartley Coleridge, Lives of the Northern Worthies, 1852, Vol. II, p. 253

(2) Mason, Preface to Translation of M. Du Fresnoy's Art of Painting (The Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, edited by Malone, 1801, Vol. III, p.7).

Mason's greater contemporary, William Cowper, showed a similar combined interest in the three sister-arts. He was, however, essentially a painter. About 1780, he was seized with a passion for landscapes and wrote - 'I draw mountains, valleys, and woods and streams'. But from his Task(1785), we learn that he liked the pleasures of the garden much more than those of painting -

'Strange! There should be found,
Who, self-imprisoned in their proud saloons,
Renounce the odours of the open field
For the unscented fictions of the loom;
Who, satisfied with only pencilled scenes,
Prefer to the performance of a God
The inferior wonders of an artist's hand.
Lovely indeed the mimic works of art;
But Nature's works, far lovelier, I admire,
None more admires, the painter's magic skill,
Who shows me that which I shall never see,
Conveys a distant country into mine,
And throws Italian light on English walls.' (1)

Cowper here gives fine poetic expression to the prevailing taste for Italian landscape which had caught hold of the imagination of men towards the close of the eighteenth century.

In the language of Cowper's biographer, Southey, to turn from a poem of Pope to a poem of Cowper is like walking from a formal garden into 'woodland scenery'. Cowper found true pleasure in fields, woods and gardens, and in the simple duties of rural life. He has devoted the entire Third Book of his Task to The Garden, but we scent garden-breezes everywhere in his poetry. In Book I, he proclaims that his love of Nature is perfectly genuine -

(1) Cowper, Task, Bk.I. ll. 413-425 (Aldine ed., Vol.II,22)

'Thou knowest my praise of Nature most sincere,
 And that my raptures are not conjured up
 To serve occasions of poetic pomp,
 But genuine and partner of them all.' (1)

Cowper's poetry improved English taste in the direction of truthfulness and sincerity. There is no touch of false Arcadianism in his picture of village-life. In this respect Cowper's position is unique among the poets of the romantic dawn. Thomson draws some of his scenes from foreign countries, and peoples his landscapes with Demons and Musidoras. The scene of Goldsmith's Traveller is ~~English~~ Gallic 'land of mirth and social ease', and his country-side in the Deserted Village, although free from pastoral conventions, is an idealised picture which provoked Crabbe's protest in his Village. In his condemnation of Goldsmith's idealisation and false, roseate presentment of rustic life, Crabbe went to the other extreme and painted in too dark colours. Cowper is as much a Dutch artist, like Crabbe, in his fidelity, but he keeps to the golden mean between Goldsmith and Crabbe. Cowper much more resembles Goldsmith than Crabbe. What distinguishes Cowper from all these poets of country-life is that he is most thoroughly English. He peopled his landscapes with real English peasants. Cowper's biographer, David Cecil, says, 'No other writer has caught the character of the landscape of Southern England so exactly.' (2) The English element in Cowper is, unlike in other writers, thoroughly unconscious, and it is this spontaneity and naturalness which stamps all his descriptions with perfect genuineness. 'He describes England because he wants to describe the country, and it is

(1) Ibid, II.150-153.

(2) David Cecil, Stricken Deer or The Life of Cowper, (London : Constable : 1929), p. 182

the only country he knows.'

Although his range of observation was limited, Cowper was a close observer of village-life. A taste for local poetry had set in from Denham's Cooper's Hill and we have already noticed in Chapter III how this taste found expression in Pope's Windsor Forest and Dyer's Grongar Hill. In Cowper's poetic descriptions also, there is a strong sense of local colour -

'Here Ouse, slow-winding through a level plain
Of Spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o'er,
Conducts the eye along his sinuous course
Delighted. There, fast rooted in their bank,
Stand, never overlooked, our favourite elms
That screen the herdsman's solitary hut;
While far beyond, and overthwart the stream,
That, as with molten glass, inlays the vale,
The sloping land recedes into the clouds;
Displaying, on its varied side, the grace
Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square town,
Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells
Just undulates upon the listening ear,
Groves, heaths, and smoking villages remote.' (1)

This description is eminently pictorial. In his verbal landscape-painting Cowper resembles the 'best Dutch painters'. Referring to Cowper's description, Saint-Beuve said - 'The Flemish masters have met their match'. Cowper was a pattern to English landscape-painters. He was Constable's poet. A great many points of similarity exist between Cowper and Gainsborough. Both give us an impression of Dutch minuteness of detail. Both represent real peasants, toiling or rejoicing in English fields. Both are typically English and both give us typical pictures of their own districts with green fields and slow ~~the~~ rivers. Cowper confined himself to charming Olney and its neighbourhood :

(1) Cowper, Task, Bk.I, ll.163-176. A passage like this will surely disprove Hazlitt's rather perverse criticism that Cowper gives us ~~no~~ general descriptions of Nature 'over clipped hedges and from his well-swept garden-walks.'

Gainsborough's carefully drawn and detailed landscapes in the Dutch manner/are taken from the country-side of Ipswich. Both Cowper and Gainsborough caught the real spirit of the landscape. The following remarks of Sir Joshua Reynolds on Gainsborough's landscapes in his XIVth Discourse may be aptly applied to Cowper's poetic pictures - 'Their grace is not academic or antique, but selected from the great school of Nature.' Andrew Lang says of Cowper - 'He set out to gather flowers....and came home with his sketch-book full of landscapes like Gainborough's and study of cattle like Moreland's.' Cowper who speaks of 'Italian light on English walls', carefully avoided the Salvatorial elements of the grandiose and vast in Nature. His occasional stormy sea-pictures remind us of Byron. The Byronic element in Cowper has been emphasised by Taine, Stopford Brooke and Pattison. This is partly true, because both wanted to escape into the wilderness from the cruelty of civilisation. Some critics try to establish Cowper's affinity with Rousseau and Shelley in his possession of a spirit of revolution. This was due to a humanitarian ideal which inspired Cowper throughout his life and which made him a poetical exponent of the Wesleyan movement. His Muse, however, prefers to wear the habitual dress of the rustic; she may occasionally don the pompous Byronic dress to find temporary pleasure in 'savage rocks', but she soon doffs it to return more happily to 'snug enclosures in the sheltered vale'.

Cowper had in him three parts of the Wordsworthian element, and Mathew Arnold sounded the true note when he said that Cowper was the precursor of Wordsworth. Both were poets

of retirement, giving the highest place to the simple joys of country-life. By painting rustic landscapes, both produce much the same sense of peace, of the absence of strife, of calmness and serenity, as the same scene in Nature would produce. Cowper, however, rests content with the simple delineation of the outward object as it appears before his eyes; he does not go into raptures or give a colouring of his own reflected emotions: Wordsworth gives expression to his high-wrought feelings stirred by that object.

Hazlitt finds in Cowper 'the finicalness of the private gentleman'; but this is no disparagement because much of the interest in his poetry springs from the easy, natural eloquence of a retiring and well-bred gentleman. His Task stands midway between the Seasons and the Excursion, Avoiding the pompousness and slovenliness of the one, and the deep analysis of the other. The Task may be wanting in the moving power and 'unbought grace' of poetry which we find in the Seasons, but it shows a much more polished taste and romantic subjectivity. Cowper lighted the torch from Thomson's fire and handed it down to Wordsworth. His Task was widely popular. Originally printed in 1785, it ran through many editions during the last decade of the eighteenth century. Cowper's clear, crisp and elegant style of 'classic purity' arose from his well-bred simplicity.

Bedfordshire is the country which Cowper knew best and his walks were limited to the wilderness of Weston Park, a country-house about a mile from Olney. The Weston Wilderness was devised by Capability Brown. 'There is

a Gothic temple in it, and an avenue; and now and again, one comes on a little sculptured urn. It is a forlorn place. But it still retains a charming flavour of the past.' (1)

He spent more time in the garden than in walking. When he was not actually gardening, he used to sit quietly in order to enjoy the beauties of Nature -

'Nature, enchanting Nature, in whose form
And lineaments divine I trace a hand
That errs not, and find raptures still renewed,
Is free to all men, universal prize.'

Cowper sought for happiness in domestic life and natural beauty and these two things he found in the small garden of Weston. Although it was not very far from the noisy world, yet our poet found in this sequestered nook a refuge and a sanctuary. The different elements that go to give this phase of Cowper's life its character are summed up in his garden-life. Sitting in the idyllic atmosphere of the garden, Cowper wrote -

'Oh friendly to the best pursuits of man,
Friendly to thought, to virtue and to peace,
Domestic life in rural leisure passed!
Few know thy value, and few taste thy sweets,
Though many boast thy favours, and affect
To understand and choose thee for their own.'

- The Task, III, 11.290
-295

There is a Wordsworthian ring in the following passage -

'Scenes formed for contemplation, and to nurse
The growing seeds of wisdom; that suggest,
By every pleasing image they present,
Reflections such as meliorate the heart,
Compose the passions, and exalt the mind.'

- Ibid, 11. 301-305

Nature appeared to him, as to Wordsworth, as a great Healer and a great Teacher. But the mood of impassioned meditation did not come upon Cowper very often. He enjoyed the

(1) David Cecil, Op.cit, p.169.

simple charms of Nature and did not like to penetrate too deep into her mysteries. As a garden-poet, he was struck by the sensuous charm of garden-beauties -

'The sight is pleased,
The scent regaled, each odoriferous leaf,
Each opening blossom, freely breathes abroad
Its gratitude, and thanks him with its sweets.'
- Ibid, ll. 620-624.

Cowper tells us that these are the rewards with which the gardener who has bestowed unremitting industry on the improvement of his garden is amply recompensed.

As a garden-poem, the Task reflects 'the leisurely, aristocratic, social life of the eighteenth century in England' (1). There is a characteristic passage in the Garden, narrating the occupations of a retired country-gentleman of the eighteenth century -

'How various his employments whom the world
Calls idle, and who justly, in return,
Esteems that busy world an idler too!
Friends, books, a garden, and perhaps his pen
Delightful industry enjoyed at home,
And Nature in her cultivated trim
Dressed to his taste, inviting him abroad
Can he want occupation who has these?
Will he be idle who has much to enjoy?
- The Task, III. ll. 352-360

According to Cowper, a man who seeks a social, not a dissipated life, has business. Life in retirement is a silent task. Then follows a passage of quiet moral reflection -

'A life all turbulence and noise may seem
To him that leads it, wise and to be praised;
But wisdom is a pearl with most success
Sought in still water, and beneath clear skies.'

Cowper even goes so far as to say that domestic happiness is the only 'bliss of Paradise' on earth. He laments that his countrymen have become fond of city-life, depriving

(1) Prof. J. W. Courthope, History of English Poetry, V, 356

themselves of the fond pleasures of the country -

'Cities then
Attract us, and neglected Nature pines,
Abandoned as unworthy of our love.

--- --- ---
But we have bid farewell
To all the virtues of those better days,
And all their honest pleasures.'

- The Task, III, 11.729-31, 744-46

Cowper deplored the deterioration of the country, and in the following description of the ill-fated country estates, we catch an accent of Goldsmith -

'Estates are landscapes, gazed upon awhile,
Then advertised, and auctioneered away,
The country starves.'

- The Task, III, 11. 755-57

Cowper set his face against the extravagant ideas of the picturesque. He satirises Capability Brown's works X -

'Improvement too, the idol of the age,
Is fed with many a victim, Lo! he comes;
The omnipotent magician, Brown, appears!
Down falls the venerable pile, the abode
Of our forefathers - a grave, whiskered race
But tasteless.'

A rage for naturalism in gardening was leading to ruthless destruction of old formal gardens. Cowper belonged to the school of Sir Uvedale Price who resented the complete annihilation of the fine formal gardens. By the time Sir Walter Scott wrote his essay On Gardens in the Quarterly (1827) the movement inaugurated by Brown had wrought great changes over the face of gardens all over England. Scott deplores the chaos that followed as a consequence of Brown's principles. Cowper paid compliment to Brown's bold innovations, but he regarded his work as devoid of grace.

Cowper's lively account of Brown's picturesque views and methods is suffused with the temperate glow of his gentle

humour-

'The lake in front becomes a lawn,
Woods vanish, hills subside, and valleys rise,
And streams, as if created for his ude,
Pursue the track of his directing wand,
Sinuous or straight, now rapid and now slow,
Now murmuring soft, now roaring in cascades,
Even as he bids ! The enraptured owner smiles.'

- The Task, III, ll.764-69.

Cowper held that gardening requires the highest skill and the most polished taste-

'To deck the shapely knoll,
That softly swelled and gaily dressed appears
A flowery island, from the dark green lawn
Emerging, must be deemed a labour due
To no mean hand, and asks the touch of Taste.'

- The Task, III, ll.628-362.

Cowper asks the rich not to grudge the cost of gardening, because they 'little know the cares, the vigilance, the labour and the skill' of the gardener. The 'learned and wise' may characterise our poet's theme as worthless, but he vindicates the rightful claim of gardening as a superior art, and a fit subject for poetry-

'To raise the prickly and green-coated gourd,
So grateful to the palate

... is an Art
That toiling ages have but just matured,
But at this moment unassayed in song.'

- The Task, ll. 446-451.

Cowper pays compliment to Philips's Splendid Shilling for having touched upon this theme, and himself begs apology for

'dressing to the taste
Of critic appetite, no sordid fare,
A cucumber.'

- Ibid, ll. 460-462.

Cowper was a lover of greenhouse where he takes us along with him in a passage (Task, III, 566-575) which regales our senses with the beauty of the exotics.

Cowper's poem of Retirement (1781) breathes a pure country-air and here he establishes a link between himself and his predecessors who wrote hill-poetry. Cowper's

theory was that 'Nature looks prettily in rhyme', and Windsor's green retreats, when described by Pope, have a thousand sweets. (1)

William Shenstone (1714-1763), the bard of the Leasowes, is the most famous gentleman-gardener of the time. Although he has suffered neglect he was a significant figure in his own day. He occupies a prominent place in the history of English landscape-gardening as one of those who helped to bring into vogue a natural style. He deliberately rejected the formal geometrical gardens with their fantastically carved trees, which was a heritage of the seventeenth century. He hated formality, and substituted for the imitation of art an imitation of Nature. In his return to Nature he worked along lines similar to those of the great landscape-gardeners, Kent, Brown and Repton. Shenstone's influence on contemporary taste was very great. According to Isaac Disraeli, Shenstone educated the nation into 'that taste for landscape-gardening which has become the model for all Europe.'

In 1745, Shenstone became the owner of the estate called the Leasowes in Worcestershire, and devoted his whole life to its improvement. He led a combined rural and literary existence. His estate on which he lavished all his fortunes has been described as 'his most elaborate poem.' The Leasowes brought him far more fame than all his literary efforts.

In 1764, that is, one after his death, appeared his Works in Verse and Prose. Essays on Men and Manners is the title covering the whole of his prose-works, filling up the second volume of his Works. These prose writings

(1) Cowper, Retirement, ll. 571-572.

consist of occasional essays, and many reflections jotted down as they occurred ~~as they~~ during the last twenty years of his life, and arranged under headings according to subject. These essays resemble Cowley's essays in grace and elegance. The most important essay is Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening which opens thus-

'Landscape should contain variety enough to form a picture upon canvas ; and this is no bad test, as I think the landscape-painter is the gardener's best designer.'

This passage shows that Shenstone was working hand in hand with professional gardeners like Kent. Shenstone's essay On Taste also deserves special notice. Like Shaftesbury he held that persons of taste are 'best qualified to distinguish moral virtue'. According to him the taste of beauty is compounded of all the ideas that have entered the imagination from our birth. Shenstone was temperamentally akin with the large harmonious spirit of Shaftesbury. Shenstone was the first to apply the term 'landscape-garden' to the eighteenth century taste for gardening,

'I have used the word landscape- gardeners , because in pursuance of our present taste in gardening, every good painter of landscape appears to me to be the most proper designer.' (1)

Like Kent, Mason and Cowper, he too was a lover of painting. He left a manuscript note-book with many pages of water-colour painting, awkward little pictures of groves, streams, cascades, lakes, vistas of blue hills and ruins. He was classic in fundamental taste and Virgil was his favourite author. The most famous walk in the Leasowes was the Virgil's Grove where he set up urns inscribed with Latin epitaphs in honour of those he admired.

(1) William Shenstone, Men and Manners, ed. by H.Ellis (London : 1927), p.27.

Dr. Johnson was effusive in his praise of the Leasowes- 'From this time he began to point his prospects, to diversify his surface, to entangle his walks and to wind his waters ;which he did with such judgment and such fancy as made his little domain the envy of the great, and the admiration of the skilful ; a place to be visited by travellers and copied by designers.' Hugh Miller in his First Impressions of England noted too much artifice and too many small surprises in the Leasowes, but he admitted the picturesqueness and scenic advantages of the place. Dodsley went into raptures over its 'Arcadian scene'-

'The eye is here presented with a fairy vision , consisting of an irregular and romantic fall of water, one hundred and fifty yards in continuity;- and a very striking and unusual scene it affords.'

Encomiums like 'a miniature model Paradise', 'landscape-lyric' have been showered upon the Leasowes. Shenstone has also been compared with Watteau, whose landscape-paintings bear affinity to the delicate charms of the Leasowes.

Horace Walpole was jealous of the fame of the Leasowes lest it might overshadow his own Strawberry Hill-

'Poor man ! he wanted to have all the world talk of him for the pretty place he had made, and which he seems to have made that it might be talked of.' (1)

Horace Walpole who was a man of the world regarded this retired ^{poet} as provincial. Gray was also very lukewarm in his appreciation of the Leasowes. Notwithstanding the adverse comments of these men, the Leasowes was a shining example of a picturesque garden. Here the gardener-poet attempted to work out his schemes for an Arcadia in all their details. Thomas Whately, whose Observations on Modern Gardening had considerable influence on contemporary taste, praised the

(1) Horace Walpole, Letters, Toynbee, Vol. XIII, p.196.

Leasowes as 'a perfect picture of Shenstone's mind', suggesting a doubt, 'whether the spot inspired his verse, or whether in the scenes which he formed, he only realised the pastoral images, which abound in his songs.' Those who never saw the Leasowes were inspired by Dodsley's romantic account of the place. In this way the Leasowes was a very important factor in educating contemporary taste. Sir Walter Scott was one of those who were charmed by the romantic descriptions of the place, and he followed Shenstone's example in his own grounds at Abbotsford.

The Leasowes enjoyed so much popularity that the plot in Richard Graves's novel Columella or The Distressed Anchoret (1779) is woven round the garden. Shenstone and Richard Graves were fast friends and the correspondence that passed between them throws much light on contemporary taste. In Columella, Columella is Shenstone himself. Shenstone was really an anchorite ; he cut himself off from the outside world, receiving distinguished visitors in his own retreat. Graves presents another lively picture of his friend in The Spiritual Quixote with a description of the Leasowes, whose cascades, urns, statues, and dedicated groves were a source of great joy to him.

The name of Shenstone as a gardener is generally associated with that of his neighbour Lord Lyttleton who developed his large estate, the Hagley Park, in the same picturesque style. Dr. Johnson speaks of Lord Lyttleton as Shenstone's rival 'whose empire, spacious and opulent, looked with disdain on the petty estate that appeared behind it.' Shenstone's recent biographer, Mr. Purkis, says

that the proximity of Hagley Park was a fortunate circumstance for Shenstone. The distinguished visitors who came to Hagley were frequently taken by Lord Lyttleton to the Leasowes. (1) This circumstance soon brought the Leasowes into repute, and Shenstone was very often consulted by aristocratic gentlemen for the laying-out of their gardens. In 1746, Lord Lyttleton brought the poet Thomson from Hagley Park to see the Leasowes and the two poets liked each other. In his correspondence with Graves, Shenstone described Thomson as the 'sweet-souled bard' and he placed an inscribed urn in honour of Thomson in his 'Virgil's Grove'.

The poetry of Shenstone has been characterised by Prof. Saintsbury as belonging to the 'artificial-natural' style. Shenstone's poems are associated with the rococo and other trivial artifices of the Leasowes. But Prof. Saintsbury truly says that the 'artificial-pastoral' marks an important stage in the history of Return to Nature. The positive achievements of Shenstone's poetry are far greater than the trend of criticism. (2) Horace Walpole's opinion was captious- 'That water-gruel bard was labouring all his life to write a perfect song and never once succeeded.' (3) But Shenstone eminently succeeded once at least, in his Schoolmistress (1748). Here we breathe the same spirit

(1) E.M.Purkis, William Shenstone :Poet and Landscape-Gardener (Wolverhampton : 1931), p.75.

Mr. H.A.Tipping says-'The scheme of improving Nature up to the due emotional standard was carried out by the poet at Leasowes and by Lord Lyttleton at Hagley.'
- The Gardens of England (op. cit.)

(2) Prof. Saintsbury, 'Young, Collins and Lesser Poets'
Cambridge Hist. of Eng. Lit., Vol. X, Ch. VII, p.149.

(3) Horace Walpole, Letters, Toynbee, XIII, p.196.

as in Goldsmith's Deserted Village with its immortal picture of the village schoolmaster. In Shenstone's poem there is a soft, sleepy and langorous charm which is not found in Goldsmith. The Schoolmistress is a happy contribution to the village-poetry of the period. The full-length portrait of the school-dame is drawn with humour, truth and loving-kindness. The poet strikes a tender note by touching upon the angelic life of childhood. His verses describing the charms of child-life are some of the happiest in the whole field of English poetry. But The Schoolmistress is not illustrative of his garden-poetry which is scattered here and there throughout his works. His Ode on Rural Elegance (1750), the longest of his odes, contains a glowing description of the ineffable pleasures of gardening-

'And Oh ! the transport most allied to song,
In some fair villa's peaceful bound,
To catch soft hint from Nature's tongue,
And bid Arcadia bloom around.'

The same poem is full of references to Stowe and Hagley with poetic descriptions of their 'Elysian beauties'. The didactic spirit is also present,

'Pleased will he tread the garden's early scenes,
And learn a moral from the rising greens.'

Like Pope Shenstone believed in the Genius of the Place who is very often invoked. In this Ode Shenstone took a meditative attitude towards Nature and shows spontaneous delight in the various minute details of Nature. He anticipates Wordsworth in regarding Nature as the proper object of study for her own sake-

'Lo! not an hedge-row hawthorn blows
Or humble hare-bell paints the plain,
Or valley winds, or fountain flows,
Or purple heath is ting'd in vain.'

The commonest objects of Nature were a source of joy and

inspiration to him,

'The habitual scene of hill and dale,
The rural herds, the vernal gale,
The tangled vetch's purple bloom,
The fragrance of the bean's perfume.'

In a passage like this we catch genuinely romantic accent.

His short poem On the Back of a Gothic Seat strikes the eighteenth century note of retirement-

'Learn to relish calm delight,
Verdant vales and fountains ~~and~~ bright ;
Trees that nod o'er sloping hills,
Caves that echo tinkling rills.'

We regret that such tender and felicitous touches are not very frequent in Shenstone's poetry. His autobiographical poem on the Progress of Taste , however, maintains a uniform level of excellence. There is a delicate vein of satire running through the piece, showing 'how great a misfortune it is for a man of small estate to have much taste.' In fact, with the income of only three-hundred pounds a year, Shenstone spent so lavishly on the Leasowes that he had to suffer from depression and disappointment in late life. In the Progress of Taste the poet leads us through

'Romantic scenes of pendent hills
And verdant vales, and falling rills
And mossy banks.'

He describes a typical eighteenth century landscape-garden containing all the elements of the picturesque introduced by Kent and Brown-

'The Naiads pour'd their urns around,
From nodding rocks o'er vales profound ;
They formed their streams to please the view,
And bade the wind, as serpents do,
And having shown them where to stray,
Threw little pebbles on their way.'

The poet's address to the flowers to diffuse their fragrance is full of delicate charm-

'Ye flowers which early spring supplies,
 Display at once your brightest dyes,
 That she your opening charms may see,
 Or what were else your charms to me ?
 Kind Zephyr ! brush each fragrant flower,
 And shed its odours round my bower.'

Flowers blossom in wild profusion in the garden of Shenstone's poetry, as they did in his Leasowes.

Shenstone's love of natural beauty was intense. His strong leanings towards romanticism are found in his truer interpretation of Nature and in the use of novel verse-forms. He is a forerunner in many respects. He played a part in the revival of the Spenserian stanza and he attempted at elegy, ode, song and ballad. In his Prefatory Essay on Elegy, Shenstone criticises the decasyllabic rhyming couplet and explains the use of quatrains for the elegiac verse.

Shenstone was an intimate friend of Bishop Percy and actively encouraged him in undertaking The Reliques. Percy acknowledged his indebtedness to Shenstone-

'The plan of this work was settled in concert with the late elegant Mr. Shenstone, who was to have borne a joint share in it, had not death unhappily prevented him. Most of the modern pieces were of his selection and arrangement.'

Shenstone showed a truly romantic spirit by his appreciation of ballad-poetry in an age when it was not very popular.

By giving encouragement to Percy in this direction, he indirectly contributed to the romantic movement. He represented the contemporary taste for melancholy in his numerous elegies. Shenstone is a typical poet of this transitional age, reflecting its tastes and the various styles. In many directions he felt and thought ahead of his time and became the pioneer of a new age.

Among the practical landscape-gardeners of the period, Humphrey Repton (1752-1818) is the best exponent of the landscape-school. He published his Sketches and Hints on Landscape-Gardening in 1795. (1) It is a permanent contribution to this art. Neither Kent nor Brown nor Chambers had left such a substantial body of opinion on this subject. Repton's aim was to raise landscape-gardening to a higher plane. As Sir Joshua Reynolds regarded painting with a high seriousness of purpose, Repton also maintained that the art of landscape-gardening should not be based upon caprice and fashion. His attempt to 'establish fixed principles' in this art reminds us of similar efforts made by Hogarth in his Analysis of Beauty in the field of painting. But Repton was very successful in giving body and shape to the fluctuating ideas of landscape-gardening. Having wonderful grasp of this branch of art, he appealed to the general reader by judicious avoidance of technical terms and details. He realised the value of aesthetics and held that true taste in landscape-gardening as well as in all the other polite arts, is 'not an accidental effect, operating on the

(1) Repton's Theory and Practice of Landscape-Gardening, published in 1803, does not fall within our period. It contains some illuminating remarks on Taste-

'Good sense may exist without good taste... both taste and understanding require cultivation and improvement. Natural taste, like natural genius, may exist to a certain degree, but without study, observation and experience, they lead to error....In poetry, in painting, and in architecture, false taste is propagated by the sanction given to mediocrity'.

- Nolen's edition, p.66.

outward senses, but an appeal to the understanding.' In other words, the landscape-gardener must have an aesthetic experience of which the intellectual content is an essential feature.

Lancelot Brown was at first Repton's guide, and he defended Brown against the criticisms of Payne Knight and Uvedale Price. Gradually he gave up the formalism of Brown, and adopted a more natural and varied style of ornamentation which was described as combining 'artistical knowledge with good taste and good sense.' The sound and rational development of the landscape-school in England belongs to the period of Repton and is largely due to his works. As a landscape-gardener, he created, transformed and improved over two hundred important places. His first great practical work in landscape was carried out about 1790 at Cobham in Kent. He also altered Kensington Gardens. Repton was a lover of Nature and a country-gentleman gifted with 'good taste'. He did not favour the idea of destroying all old formal gardens. He respected and preserved what was most worthy in the old style. In his Sketches and Hints he says -

'Mankind are apt to fly from one extreme to the other ; thus, because straight lines prevailed in the ancient style, some modern improvisers have mistaken crookedness for the line of beauty, and slovenly carelessness for natural ease ; they call every species of regularity formal, and with this hackneyed assertion that "Nature abhors a straight line", they fatigue the eye with continual curvatures.'

(1)

In another passage he says-

'There are situations in which the ancient style of gardening is very properly preserved : witness the academic groves and classic walks in our Universities.'

(2)

(1) Humphrey Repton, The Art of Landscape-Gardening, ed. by John Nolen (Lond : 1907), p.45.

(2) Ibid, p.59.

From these passages it is clear that towards the close of the century, the excessive craze for sickly naturalism was giving place to a healthy naturalism in landscape-gardening. Repton did not attempt merely to reproduce the effects of Nature in a mechanical or artificial way; he dealt rather with the causes by which these effects are produced.

Repton criticised Mason's theory of the affinity between painting and gardening. He thought that now such affinity exists-

'The enthusiasm for picturesque effect seems to have so completely bewildered Mason that he mistakes the essential difference between the landscape-painter and landscape-gardener. ' (1)

Repton discusses the subject with constant references to the paintings of Claude-

'Some of the most beautiful pictures of Claude de Lorraine consist of a dark foreground, with a very small opening to distant country.' (2)

Repton believed that landscape-gardening had its origin in England. He never mentions the influence of China -

'To improve the scenery of a country, and to display its native beauties with advantage, is an art which originated in England, and has therefore, been called English gardening.' (3)

Repton and his work will occupy a unique and permanent place in the history of landscape-gardening.

The garden was a constant subject of literary treatment in the eighteenth century. This age may claim the glory of creating the art of landscape-scenes in nature, with fields and hills, woods and water for canvas. The

(1) Humphrey Repton, op.cit. , p.56.

(2) Ibid, p.55

(3) Preface to Sketches and Hints.

literature of landscape-gardening was abundant and copious in this age. The second half of the century produced works on gardening in great abundance in verse and prose. A professional gardener like Kent worked hand in hand with a poet like Pope and the result was the popularisation of the taste for landscape-gardening. The note of dissent struck by Pope against formalism in his Epistle to Lord Burlington was echoed by many poets of this generation. The immense popularity of Mason's English Garden shows how keen an interest was taken by the literary world of that day in the theories of landscape-gardening. Cowper enriched the store-house of garden-poetry with his superior poetical gift. Shenstone set a brilliant practical example of landscape-gardening by the creation of idyllic pastoral scenes in his Leasowes. Lord Lyttleton's Hagley Park was another instance out of innumerable efforts of the gentlemen-gardeners of the period. The fantastic views of Capability Brown and Sir William Chambers added a zest to the various controversies about the designs of landscape-gardens. The latter half of the eighteenth century viewed with distrust the destruction of the formal garden which had gone on apace in the earlier part of the century. The activities of Humphrey Repton introduced a new note of healthy naturalism. But the activities of all people interested in gardening - whether ^{of} professional men like Kent, Brown, Chambers and Repton, or of gentlemen-gardeners like Shenstone and Lord Lyttleton, or of poets like Pope, Mason and Cowper - all contributed to lead the taste of the day from the walled enclosure of the old formal garden to the more open and

unrestricted landscape-garden, avoiding geometrical patterns and following the wild luxuriance of Nature. The landscape-gardener was drawing his inspiration from the landscape-painter. Claude and Salvator were great models of Kent, and we have seen how Kensington Gardens with its dead trunks of trees bore traces of the Salvatorial influence. The whole face of England was beautified by the garden-designs of these men whom we have discussed in these two chapters. Gardens and grottos sprang up everywhere and Pope's grotto at Twickenham was a solitary but famous instance out of many grottos of that age. It remains for us to see in the next chapter how the newly-awakened taste for gardens and grottos inspired much of the minor-poetry of the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER VIII

MINOR POETS OF THE XIIIITH. CENTURY.

The varied strands of taste hitherto discussed meet in the poetry of the minors. Most of them are swayed by the craze for writing garden-poems and hill-poems in the picturesque manner. Some have a predilection for the Gothic or the Chinese taste, whereas others are classical or didactic in their vein. Although the minors cannot be brought under water-tight compartments, they may be conveniently grouped round some one or other of these tastes, showing the predominating influence upon their poetry. The most prominent of the minors, John Gilbert Cooper, whose works reflect the many-sided tastes of the period, has been discussed in the First Chapter. Here we may conveniently begin with William Julius Mickle and John Scott, who like Cooper, have touched upon the different tastes of the eighteenth century in a remarkable manner.

John Scott (1730 - 1783) assimilated the conflicting ideas of his time and in his poetry we find a reflection of all these ideas. In his Oriental and Chinese Eclogues he tried to recapture the spirit of India and China. He drew largely upon Sir William Jones's Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations and upon Jones's Oriental poetry. The growing influence of Eastern poetry has been recorded by Scott in his poem On the Ingenious Mr. Jones's Elegant Translations and Imitations of Eastern Poetry, - (1)

(1) John Scott in Chalmers' English Poets, Vol. XVII.

"The Asian Muse, a stranger fair!
 Becomes at length Britannia's care;
 And Hafiz' lays, and Sadi's strains,
 Resounds along our Thames's plains."

Scott was indebted to Holwell's Indostan and Dow's Indostan for his Indian Eclogues. In his prose Preface to the Oriental Eclogues, Scott bestowed high praise on Collins's Eclogues as precluding the appearance of any subsequent work, but Scott claimed that his scenery and sentiment are different from Collins's. Scott's first Eclogue is Arabian in inspiration and is named Zerad or the Absent Lover. The second is an East Indian Eclogue, called Serim, or the Artificial Famine. There are references to the Hindu worship of the genius of the Ganges, to Brahma, Vishnu, Durga and other Hindu gods; but Scott had not the power to penetrate into the inner spirit of the Hindu world. His predecessor Sir William Jones had achieved considerable success in this direction.

Scott was more successful in recapturing the spirit of the Chinese world, and in his Chinese Eclogue: Li-Po: or the Good Governor, he has given us a graphic description of a Chinese Prospect-

"The distant prospects well the sight might please,
 With pointed mountains, and romantic trees:
 From craggy cliffs, between the verdant shades,
 The silver rills rush'd down in bright cascades;
 O'er terrac'd steeps rich cotton harvests wav'd,
 And smooth canals the rice-clad valley laved;
Long rows of cypress parted all the land,
 And tall pagodas crowned the river's sand."

The 'Chinese willow' hanging its foliage in the English garden did not escape Scott's notice. In his Poetical Epistle I : The Garden, the poet refers to Horace Walpole, Mason and Capability Brown as great arbiters of taste in that age when fashion had spread 'garden-scenes'

round the villas of wealthy people. Scott did not favour the extravagant craze of the landscapists -

'This long straight walk, that pool's unmeaning round,
These short-curv'd paths that twist beneath the trees,
Disgust the eye, and make the whole displease.

"No scene like this"; I say, "did Nature raise."

- Epistle I : The Garden.

A typical Chinese garden was more to his taste. He liked the pleasing scenes -

'Of winding walks, smooth lawns, and shady groves,
Where China's willow hangs its foliage fair,
And Po's tall poplar waves its top in air,
And the dark maple spreads its umbrage wide.' - Ibid.

Scott had a keen eye for observing natural phenomena.

His poetical Epistle II : On Winter Amusements in the Country contains little bits of cheery landscape -

'Sometimes the Sun extends his cheering beam,
And all the landscape casts a golden gleam:
Clear is the sky, and calm and soft the air,
And through thin mist each object looks more fair.'

Besides the Oriental and Chinese Eclogues, Scott wrote some Moral Eclogues, containing rich description of natural scenery. The four Eclogues describe respectively, Spring-Morning, Summer-Forenoon, Summer afternoon and Autumn-evening. All these poems show the poet's love of rural life. In Eclogue II Benevolence the poet has depicted a bright landscape -

'Surrounding groves the wandering sight confined -
All, save where, westward, one wide landscape shined.
Down in the dale were neat enclosures seen,
The winding hedge-row, and the thicket green;
Rich marshland next a glossy level showed,
And through grey willows silver rivers flow'd:
Beyond high hills with towers and villas crowned,
And waving forests, form'd the prospect's bound.'

Scott's long descriptive poem Amwell, 1776, deserves special notice because it conspicuously shows the taste for the picturesque. Amwell is a village in Hertfordshire where the poet lived in retirement. His poem, therefore, comes under the class of 'local poetry' or 'Hill-Poetry' of the eighteenth century, and the poet very appropriately pays compliments to Dyer and Thomson, favourite bards of 'Descriptive Muse'. The poet's invocation to Claude or Rubens for the inspiration of his landscape-poetry shows how potent was the influence of landscape-painting in this century -

'The skill of Claude or Rubens, or of him
Whom now on Levant's banks, in groves that breathe
Enthusiasm sublime, the sister-nymphs
Inspire.'

The reference in the last lines is to George Smith of Chichester, a landscape-painter and poet. Having invoked the aid of these painters the poet attempts a pictorial description of 'sweet pastoral landscapes' -

'How beautiful,
How various is yon view! Delicious hills
Bounding smooth vales, smooth vales by winding streams
Divided, that here glide through glassy banks
In open sun, there wander under shade
Of aspen tall, or ancient elm, whose boughs
O'erhang grey castles, and romantic farms.'

In the following lines the poet pointedly draws our attention to the pictorial elements of his description by repeated use of the word 'picturesque' -

'How picturesque the view! Where up the side
Of that steep bank, her roofs of russet thatch
Rise mix'd with trees, above whose swelling tops
Ascends the tall church tow'r, and loftier still
The hill's extended ridge. How picturesque:
Where slow beneath that bank the silver stream
Glides by the flowery isle, and willow groves
Wave on the northern verge, with trembling tufts
Of osier intermixed.'

Scott's poetical Essay on Painting bears testimony to his love of painting. Du Fresnoy's Art of Painting is the acknowledged source of his inspiration. This book of the French poet-painter had considerable influence on the eighteenth century. Mason had produced a poetical translation of Du Fresnoy and in his poem on the English Garden he had tried to develop the tendency of combining the principles of poetry and painting. John Scott's impressionistic nature readily absorbed all the ideas of the picturesque which were shaping the minds of men in the eighteenth century. He was deeply influenced by the beauty of Claude and Salvator. He brings out the essence of Claude's canvas in the following lines -

'When Claude's bright morn on Mola's Precincts draws,
What sweet quiescence marks the graves and lawns!
How calm his herds among the ruins graze!
How calm his curious peasant stands to gaze.

Calm, serene and beautiful, is the hall-mark of Claude and the impression of quiet serenity is kept up in all his pictures. One predominating feature appears in a single piece, a principle which Scott asks all artists to follow -

'Whate'er we copy, or whate'er we feign,
Through all the piece one character should reign.'

The poets, painters and landscape-gardeners of the age were all recommending unity of design. Humphrey Repton in Sketches and Hints on Landscape-gardening explains this principle very elaborately -

"Unity of design in all compositions is, confessedly, one of the first principles in each of the polite arts," and Repton appeals to the landscape-gardeners to be guided by this principle. - (1)

Humphrey Repton, in Sketches and Hints on Landscape-gardening, Nolen's Edition, p.33.

Scott illustrates this point by giving us a contrasted picture of Salvator Rosa who never mixes sweetness with severity. The following lines are well worth quoting because they dwell upon the salient features of Salvator Rosa's pencil -

'When bold Salvator under turbid skies
Bids his scath'd hills and blasted trees arise,
Behind wild rocks bids his wild stream be lost,
And from vast cliffs shows broken fragment tossed
Midst them no shepherds lead their flocks along,
Nor village maidens seem to tune their song
But solemn augurs flights of birds survey
Or stern-eyed robbers wait the passing prey.'

Scott has not failed in this connection to celebrate Poussin's 'Arcadian Vale Serene'. Like Mason, Scott took keen interest in landscape-gardening. In his Verses to a Friend, Planting, Scott advised his friend to

'Dispose thy ground, and meliorate thy soil;
Range thy young plants in walks or clumps or bowers,
Diffuse o'er sunny banks thy fragrant flowers.'

Scott wins our admiration by a happy combination in his poetry of all that is picturesque in painting and gardening. Chalmers has justly remarked that Scott 'viewed Nature with the eye of a genuine poet.' We may say that he had the eye of the painter too. To read his poetry is like passing through a picture-gallery, or taking a walk in the midst of delightful rural scenes. He takes us through 'winding paths of venerable shade', giving Claudian pictures.

Besides the poems discussed above, Scott wrote twenty-seven Odes, of which the Ode to Landscape comes under the class of hill-poetry, with hills, rills, cascades, shades, green fields and 'abbey's whitened wall'. Scott's broad, open and liberal mind and keen aesthetic sense grasped Beauty wherever he found it. In his Ode to the Muse: or Poetical Enthusiasm (Ode XV), he praises the beauty of

Portugal -

'Nor Greece nor Rome delights me more
Than Tagus' bank, or Thames's shore:'

The imagination of the poets of the eighteenth century went out in search for ideal beauty to different parts of the globe - to Greece, to China, to India and to Portugal. John Scott is only an isolated instance out of many. The picturesque beauty of Portugal inspired the poetic genius of William Julius Mickle whose place is only second to that of Scott among the minors.

William Julius Mickle (1734-1788) published his Almada Hill : An Epistle from Lisbon in 1781 after his return to England from Lisbon where the poem had been composed. This is another contribution to the hill-poetry of the eighteenth century. The prose Preface introduces us to the solemn beauty of the spot -

'The river Tagus, below and opposite to Lisbon, is edged by steep, grotesque rocks, particularly on the south side. Those on the south are generally higher and much more Magnificent and Picturesque than the cliffs of Dover. Upon one of the highest of these, and directly opposite to Lisbon, remain the stately ruins of the castle of Almada.' - (1)
In describing the grandeur of mountain-scenery the poet has depicted some characteristic horror-scenes after the Salvatorial manner -

'The tower-like summits of the mountain-shore,
Dappling the lofty cliffs, that coldly throw
Their sable horrors o'er the vales below.'

(1) William Julius Mickle in Chalmers' English Poets, Vol. XVII

'Hark, what low sound from Cintra's rock! the air
Trembles with horror; fainting lightnings glare

--- ---
 Convulsive staggers rock the eternal ground
 And heave the Tagus from his bed profound:
 A dark red cloud the towers of Lisbon veils.'

John Scott was captivated by the reposeful calm of Nature:
 Mickle by her grand and awe-inspiring aspect. Byron might
 have drawn some hints from Mickle for his description of
 Portugal in the Childe Harold.

Mickle was a lover of melancholy and there are many
 Gothic touches in his Elegies. In 1762 he wrote Pollio:
An Elegy, in the woods near Roslin Castle. It was suggested
 by the ruins of the place which had been the scene of his
 early amusements. Here is a Gothic touch -

'August and hoary, o'er the sloping dale,
 The Gothic abbey rears its sculptured tow'rs;
 Dull through the roofs resounds the whistling gale;
 Dark solitude among the pillars lowers.'

The actual surroundings of Roslin, however, are more
 cheerful than August. But Mickle is correct when he invests
 the Roslin castle itself with grandeur -

'High o'er the pines, that with their darkening shade
 Surround yon craggy bank, the castle rears
 Its crumbling turrets: still its tow'ry head
 A war-like mien, a sullen grandeur wears.'

Ruskin complained that in Scottish song, the sun always
 sets over Ben Achree or some other 'aguish' hill.

Dr. Kitchin says, "This was the peculiar grace of Scottish
 poetry. Even in the eighteenth century when English poets
 were surveying mankind from China to Peru, the Northern
 Muse was local and particular. Hence those vivid Hebridean
 touches in Thomson, and hence the well-marked local features
 of Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd. As the Scottish genius refused
 to be cosmopolitan - save when it used the English tongue in
 imitation of English themes - so its descriptive vocabulary

was vivid and formed clearly with the eye on the object." -(1)

The scene of ^{Mickle's} his poem, Night-Piece is an old churchyard.

Here he gives a description of St. Giles's Cathedral in Edinburgh, rearing its ancient head, bathed in silver moonlight. In his Elegy on Mary Queen of Scots, the poet gives us descriptions of Edinburgh's 'Gothic towers', of the 'stern-browed' Edinburgh Castle, and of the Holyrood House. He draws a glowing picture of the rugged hills and woods glowing in moon-light, and the silvery Forth and Annan flowing through the willows. Moonlight had special fascination for Mickle whose famous Ballad of Cumnor Hall opens with a moon-lit scene -

'The dews of summer night did fall,
And moon the sweet regent of the sky,
Silvered the walls of Cumnor Hall
And many an oak that grew thereby.'

Throughout his life Sir Walter Scott appears to have displayed a keen interest in the poems of Mickle. In his Introduction to Kenilworth Scott paid compliment to Mickle's power of verbal melody, and his early enthusiasm for Mickle's ballad made him use the legend as the basis for his novel. Mickle himself never claimed the ballad which appeared in Evans's collection. Mr. West says, 'Mickle either did or did not write the ballad. There is high probability that he did.' (2)

Moonlight is generally associated with melancholy in Mickle's mind and he addresses Melancholy to 'wake her melting power.' Mickle fully realised that Melancholy was one of the chief features of contemporary taste.

(1) Dr. George Kitchin - The Language of Poetry or The History of English Poetic Diction, (D. Litt. Thesis).

(2) S. George West in The Mod. Lang. Rev., Vol. 29 (1934), p.281

A taste for melancholy had dawned in the early years of this century. In 1709, Steele in one of his Essays in the Tatler (No. 89) had very succinctly explained the close connection between melancholy and taste for the picturesque -

'That calm and elegant satisfaction which the vulgar call Melancholy is the true and proper delight of men of knowledge. Such a frame of mind raises that sweet enthusiasm, which warms the imagination at the sight of every work of Nature, and turns all round you into picture and landscape(1)

Mickle's Muse was nurtured upon a taste for melancholy. In his Elegy on the Mary Queen of Scots he has drawn a typical Gothic scene -

'Oh! whether by the moss-grown bushy dell
Where from the oak depends the mistletoe,
Where creeping ivy shades the Druids' cell,
Where from the rocks the gurgling waters
flow.'

His long Spenserian poem Syr Martyn (1767) in two cantos, is full of rural scenes and 'magic landscapes'. Mickle is fond of describing castles standing in the sunny vale, beneath a green hill, surrounded by trees, and girt round by a silver stream running through trim gardens. Beautiful descriptions of quiet country-scenes are very frequent -

'Soothed by the murmurs of a plaintive streame,
A wyld romantic dell its fragrance shed,
Safe from the thonder showre and scorching beame
Their faerie charmes the summer bowres displaid'.
- Syr Martyn.

(1) The Tatler (with illustrations and notes), London, 1786

Mickle wrote another Spenserian imitation On the Neglect of Poetry where he shows how the sister-arts, Music, Painting and Poetry are closely connected -

'But cloth'd in Heaven's own light
Homer's bold painting shall immortal shine;
Wide o'er the world shall ever sound the might,
The raptur'd music of each deathless line.'

Although Mickle did not write long poems on the East, like John Scott, he clothed the 'fair East' with a romantic atmosphere in his Ode to May-Day : or the Druidical Festival -

'Awake, ye gales, your fragrance shed;
Ye mountain cedars, bend the head;
Ye clouds of incense, from Arabia rise
Balmy, as after vernal rains,
Display, fair East, thy beauteous plains,
As one great altar fuming to the skies.'

In his Elegy on Liberty, Mickle speaks admiringly of constant summer clothing Indian soil, and of the Ganges seeing smiling harvests.

John Scott and Mickle were both fascinated by the East but they were not altogether dominated by the Oriental taste alone. Their poetry shows how the Oriental taste existed side by side with the taste for the picturesque. Both were inspired by the great Orientalist, Sir William Jones who should be given a high place among the minors. (1) Jones was a man of the finest taste, and he presented to the English reader a new set of images, and opened new sources of the sublime and the pathetic, by familiarising the scenery and manners of the Eastern regions.

Jones penetrated into the inner shrine of Hinduism and grasped its real spirit, as shown in his Hymns to

(1) Sir Willaim Jones, Chalmers' English Poets, Vol. XVIII

Hindu deities. His verse-tales, The Palace of Fortune and The Enchanted Fruit ; or the Hindu Wife all show his wonderful insight into the heart of Hindu religion.

The opening lines of his Hymn to the Ganges are charming-

'How sweetly Ganga smiles, and glides
Luxuriant o'er her broad autumnal bed!
Her waves perpetual verdure spread,
While health and plenty deck her golden sides,'

His verse-tale on The Hindu Wife is rich with the perfume of sweet-smelling Indian flowers of all kinds, a pretty comprehensive list of which has been given towards the beginning. There is also a catalogue of well-known Indian fruits, herbs and spices. Jones was deeply read in Hindu mythological lore and the various speeches put into the mouth of some characters from the Mahabharata are quite in keeping with their individual nature. Hindu manners, customs and ideals were firmly apprehended by Jones whose poems brought the West in touch with the ideals of the Orient.

Jones was deeply interested in manifold strands of Orientalism and he tried to recapture the spirit of Arabia , Persia and China. His Arabian Eclogue : Solima (1768) takes us into the dreamy and langorous atmosphere of the Arabian land. The following lines depict a beautiful oriental landscape, fragrant with the odour of flowers -

'See yon fair groves that o'er Amana rise,
And with their spicy breath embalm the skies;
Where every breeze sheds incense o'er the vales,
And every shrub the scent of musk exhales!
See through yon opening glade a glittering scene,
Lawns ever gay, and meadows ever green'.

The idea of Carpe diem which is so conspicuous in Persian poetry has been brought out by Sir William Jones in his Turkish Ode of Mesihi -

'What gales of fragrance scent the vernal air!
Hills, dales and woods, their loveliest mantles wear,
Who knows what cares await that fatal day,
When ruder gusts shall banish gentle May.'

The burden of this exquisite poem, so rich in poetic fancy, ardour and sensibility is -

'Be gay : too soon the flowers of spring fade.'

It is not improbable that Byron drew some hints from Jones's magnificent descriptions of voluptuous oriental scenery.

Jones had a keen eye for observing the picturesque aspects of a scene. We light upon glittering images of beauty as we go through his poem →

'The sparkling dew-drops o'er the lilies play,
Like orient pearls, or like the beams of day'

--- --- --- ---
Clear drops, each morn, impearl the rose's bloom,
And from its leaf the zephyr drinks perfume;
The dewy buds expand their lucid store.'

'The shrubs revive in valleys, meads and bowers,
And every stalk is diadem'd with flowers.'

-Turkish Ode of Mesihi

Jones's poem on The Seven Fountains : An Eastern Allegory (1767) exhales richly distilled perfume. The rich oriental colouring of this poem reminds us of Keat's images -

'His ravished sense a scene of pleasure meets,
A maze of joy, a paradise of sweets;
But first his lips had touched the alluring
stream,
That through the globe displayed a silver
gleam.'

The poet leads us through 'jasmine bowers and violet-scented dales'. There is full feast for the senses in the following lines -

'Though streams of honey flowed through every
mead
Though balm and amber dropped from every reed
Held half the sweets that Nature's ample hand
Had poured luxuriant o'er this wondrous land.'

Jones's translations from the Oriental classics have been discussed in the chapter on Chinese Taste. Here we may quote a bit of Chinese of landscape from his rendering of a Chinese Ode -

'Behold, where yon blue riv'let glides
Along the laughing dale,
Light reeds bedeck its verdant sides,
And frolic in the gale.'

The efforts of Sir William Chambers had made the Chinese landscape very popular in the eighteenth century. Jones was not alone in his admiration for Chinese landscape. Even the poet-laureate, William Whitehead (1715-1785), with his absorbing classical taste, was open to the new ideas of landscape imported from China.

William Whitehead in his Prologue to the Orphan of China (1759) went so far as to bid adieu to Greek and Roman ideals, and hail inspiration from China -

'Enough of Greece and Rome. The exhausted store
Of either nation now can charm no more

--- ---
On eagle wings the poet of tonight
Soars for fresh virtues to the source of lights,
To China's Eastern realms; and boldly bears
Confucius' morals to Britannia's ears.
Accept the imported boon.'

(1)

This appeal of the laureate-poet to the nation to accept the imported boon from China is very significant of the taste of the times. Like Horace Walpole, he also makes a passing reference to 'China's Sharawaggi' in his Poetical Answer to the Grove in Surrey.

Whitehead took a genuine interest in gardening and he laid the scenes of his poems in the garden. In his

William Whitehead in Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVI.

Lines to a Gentleman on His Pitching a Tent in His Garden we are taken through bowers and sylvan scenes woven by Nature -

'Each fairy form we whilom traced
Along the morn or evening dew,
Nymph, Satyr, Faun, shall vindicate their grove.'

Whitehead was a conscious imitator of Pope, and like his master he believed in the 'genius' or animating spirit of a particular place. In his poem just mentioned, he conceives the 'Genius of the Wood' as nursing the saplings. Classical address to heathen divinities is one of his favourite devices. His classical taste is most prominent in the Hymn to the Nymph of the Bristol Spring (1751). This poem shows his love of retirement into wooded solitude where the sight of the fountains reminded him of Grecian bards. He ascribes a presiding deity to every scene, and imagines the Satyrs dancing and Pan playing upon his mystic pipe. He gives classical descriptions of the flowery vales and pastoral scenes of Cheltenham and Scarborough. Hellenism repeatedly breaks out in his address to the deities of the ocean, to Neptune and the Tritons. The poem reminds us of Keats's Hyperion with its wealth of classical suggestiveness. He borrows some metaphors from painting and talks of 'Nature's breathing paint'. He attempted to paint little bits of landscape -

'Ye rocks that round me rise, ye pendant woods
High waving to the bréeze, ye gliding streams
That steal in silence through the mossy clefts.'

His description of the wide prospect contains all the conventional properties of eighteenth century hill-poetry. Climbing up to the towering height of Mont Clifton, the poet's 'enraptured eye' -

'Beholds the cultivated prospects rise
 Hill above hill, with many a verdant bound
 Of hedge-row chequer'd. Now on painted clouds
 Sportive they roll, or down yon winding stream,
 Give their light mantles to the wafting wind.'
-Hymn to the Nymph of the Bristol Spring.

Solitude added keen relish to the poet's enjoyment of
 natural scenery -

'Solitude itself
 But opens to his keener view new worlds,
 Worlds of his own : from every genuine scene
 Of Nature's varying hand his active mind
 Takes fire at once.'

The poet's interest in gardens and groves appears everywhere, and most prominently in his poetical Epistle from a Grove in Derbyshire to a Grove in Surrey which is thoroughly permeated by the classical spirit. We see the gods among the woods, chanting songs, and fauns and sylvens sporting there. This Epistle is followed by a poetical Answer of the Grove in Surrey which has been conceived in the same classical vein. In his Lines to the Rev. Dr. Lowth, Whitehead tells us that he caught the classic streams with early thirst and the 'Attic hours' of his youth were passed in sweet fields. This early communion with Nature impressed him with the sense of an unseen personality in the physical world. Like the Greeks, he fervently believed that all the visible phenomena of Nature were caused by the agency of particular deities. Whitehead's poetry reminds us of Erasmus Darwin's Botanic Garden which is also replete with Greek deities. But neither Darwin nor Whitehead could conceive the Nymphs and Goddesses as impassioned living beings. Whitehead had far more insight than Darwin to whom these deities were mere decorative images and names. Whitehead tried also to recapture for us the spirit of ancient Rome in his Ode to the Tiber (1755). The sight of the river evoked all the classical associations in his mind.

The tastes of Christopher Smart (1722-1771) were similar to those of Whitehead in many respects. The classical strain is predominant in both, and both were imitators of Pope. They were, however, equally open to other influences. Whitehead was a lover of the Chinese garden, Smart of the Gothic style in architecture -

'Ye Hills that overlook the plains,
Where wealth and Gothic greatness reigns,
Where Nature's hand by Art is checked,
And Taste herself is architect.'

- Smart's Ballad X (1750) (1)

In his Ballad IX : The Faire Recluse the poet expresses his sense of awe at the sight of Gothic towers, simple and great in pastoral magnificence.

Smart differs from Whitehead in his attitude towards gardening. Whitehead being a lover of the Chinese landscape, hailed the landscape-garden with delight. In his Lines on the Late Improvements at Nuneham, Whitehead praises 'Nature's curve' -

'The soft undulations both distant and near,
That heave from the lawns, and yet scarcely appear.'

Smart was, on the contrary, a lover of formal gardens -

'Or satiate with Nature's random scenes,
Let's to the gardens regulated greens,
Where Taste and elegance command
Art to lend her daedal hand
Where Flora's flock, by nature wild,
To discipline are reconciled.'
- Smart's Night-Piece : An Ode.

Smart eulogises the taste of the ancients in his Ballad II : The Lass with the Golden Locks -

'Such painters of old drew the queen of the fair,
'Tis the taste of the ancients, 'tis the classical hair.'

Dominated by the classical taste, Smart produced Latin versions of Pope's Essay on Criticism and Ode on St. Cecilia's Day and of Milton's L'Allegro.

(1) Christopher Smart in Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVI

The inspiration which Smart derived from Pope's Windsor Forest was of real service to him. His Hop-Garden : A Georgic (1752), describing the beauty of his native county, Kent, connects him with the writers of local poetry in the eighteenth century. It is written in the vein of Mason's English Garden, but enlivened by flights of fancy. The hop-land appears to him as 'the joint work of Art and Nature. We hear the swain whistling with rustic notes throughout the poem. The poet also gives us a picturesque description of the Aurora Borealis →

'Thus sits high-canopied above the clouds,
Terrific beauty of nocturnal skies,
 Northern Aurora ; she through the azure air
 Shoots, shoots her tremulous rays in painted streaks
 Continual, while waving to the wind
 O'er Night's dark veil her lucid tresses flow.'
 - Hop-Garden, Bk. 1.

Smart uses picturesque imagery of the soothing kind in his allegorical poem on Reason and Imagination (1764). Imagination comes, decked with jewels and brilliants, carrying a magic wand in her right hand, and a chart in her left. She approached Reason who was leading a solitary life in a hill with the Book of Wisdom. She offered wanted to be Reason's wife and as matrimonial dowers all the 'colours of Arabian glow.' Reason refused to take her as his mate, but was willing to exchange his 'compass and his rule' with her 'wand and winged steed'. As Smart was an imitator of Akenside he tried to harmonise Reason and Imagination in this allegorical fashion.

The Stanzas in Smart's Song to David¹ are full of images evoking pictures in the mind. These pictures present a contrast to contemporary art. They are vivid, particular, bright and life-like, instead of being generalised in tone. He saw the things about which he wrote,

1. Christopher Smart, Song to David, Ed. by J.R. Tait (London: 1898).

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distinct, coloured and fragrant -

'All scenes of painting crowd the map
Of Nature; to the mermaid's lap
The Scaled infant clings.'

(St. LIV, ll. 322-24)

'Marshalled in the fenced land
The peaches and pomegranates stand
Where wild carnations blow'.

(St. LX, ll. 348-360)

With Smart and Whitehead we may class

Francis Fawkes (1721-77) in the rank of Popean imitators.

Fawkes is regarded as the best translator since Pope.

Fawkes differs from Smart in his aversion to the Gothic -

'Behold that portico! how vast, how wide!
The pillars Gothic, wrought with barbarous pride! (1)

Although Fawkes is devoid of originality, we cannot ignore his Bramham Park (1745), containing some landscapes after the manner of the hill-poetry of the century. Like the other landscape-poets, Fawkes leads us -

'Through every variegated rural scene
Of shady forest, and of meadow green,
Of winding valleys, and of rising hills,
Of mossy fountains and translucent rills;
Where downs, or level lawns expand wide,
The groves, the garden and the wood divide;
Where walks by long-extended walks are crossed,
And alleys in meandering alleys lost.'

The parks or 'informal pleasure-grounds', extensive in area were an important feature of a well-to-do Englishman's estate in the eighteenth century. The parks possessed the charm of beautiful natural scenery and distinguished landscape-architects spent their efforts in beautifying these parks. The creation of 'rural' or 'country' parks was the aim of Humphrey Repton. The marvellous beauty of the typical English country-place of the eighteenth century was partly due to these parks.

In 1754, Fawkes wrote Odes on the four seasons, using the conventional properties of the pastoral.

(1) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVI

Among the Popean imitators and poets having a decidedly classical taste we may class Richard Jago. Although his rank as a poet is not very high, yet he deserves special mention, by reason of his giving expression to the multifarious tastes of his time, each of which left its trace upon his impressionistic nature.

Jago's Edge-Hill (1767) is a landscape-poem and a contribution to the hill-poetry of the time. The poet explains his purpose in the Preface -

'The poem takes its name from a ridge of hills, which is the boundary between the counties of Oxford and Warwick and remarkable for its beautiful extensive prospect....The writer has exhibited the beauty of his native county in a poetical delineation; divided by an imaginary line, into a number of distinct scenes, corresponding with the different times of the day, each forming an entire picture, and containing its due proportion of objects and colouring.' (1)

In the first book of the Edge-Hill there is a string of references to some of the famous country-estates of the eighteenth century, such as 'Charlecote's fair domain', 'Upton's airy fields', Walton, and Compton-Verney. The second book also contains beautiful descriptions of the country-seats of Warwick, Kenilworth, Bolsal, Wroxal and Coventry. In describing Compton-Verney, the country-seat of Lord Willoughby, the poet gives combines expression to his classical taste and taste for gardening -

'At his command,
New pillars grace the dome with Grecian pomp
Of Corinth's gay design. At his command,
On hill or plain, new culture clothes the scene
With verdant grass or variegated grove;
And bubbling rills in sweeter notes discharge
Their liquid stores. Along the winding vale,
At his command, observant of the shore,
The glittering stream, with correspondent grace,
Its course pursues, and o'er the exulting wave
The stately bridge a beauteous form displays.'

(1) Richard Jago in Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVII

Here we have some of the chief elements which are found in Claude's or Poussin's canvas.

Jago was a follower of the Thomsonian school and he has filled his pages with many pictorial descriptions, which may not attain a high level of poetic beauty, but at the same time these are a clear reflection of the contemporary taste for the picturesque. There is Claudian picture of perfect woodland scenery in his Edge-Hill, Bk. I -

'See how the pillar'd isles and stately dome
Brighten the woodland shade! While scattered hills,
Airy and light, in many a conic form,
A theatre compose, grotesque and wild,
And, with their shaggy sides, contract the vale
Winding, in straitend circuit, round their base.
Beneath their waving umbrage Flora spreads
Her spotted couch, primrose and hyacinth
Profuse, with every simple bud that blows
On hill or dale.'

Jago associates taste and culture with 'rural landscape' and Gothic art means to him lack of true taste. He gives descriptions of the 'moated hall', 'massy towers' and 'embattled walls' raised on the mountain-precipice. He says that the Gothic age did not care for rural beauty or the gentle arts. He is a follower of Addison in his denunciation of the Gothic as barbarous -

'While the portcullis huge, or moated fence,
The sad reverse of savage times betray
Distrust, barbarity and Gothic rule.'
- Edge-Hill, Bk. I.

Jago could not conceive of the existence of polished arts in the Middle Ages. His attitude to these ages was diametrically opposite to that of Bishop Hurd who discovered in the mediaeval times a mine of picturesque beauty. Jago must have watched with anxious care the struggle between the Gothic and Palladian tastes. In the following lines the poet names the estates, specifying the various styles - Gothic, Chinese or Classical - which they represent -

'Of Alcot's swelling lawns, and fretted spires
Of fairest model, Gothic or Chinese -
Of Easington's, and Tolton's verdant meads
And groves of various lead, and Honington,
Profuse of charms, and attic elegance.'

Jago advises those who are inclined to the Gothic to select a watery vale covered with lofty pines : the Palladian arch and Grecian portico should be built in royal villas. He has described the famous Palladian country-seat of Stowe in Buckinghamshire, also commemorated by Pope and Mason -

'Where Nature's charms
With learned art combined; the richest domes,
And fairest lawns, adorned with every grace
Of beauty, or magnificent design,

--- --- ---
The villas of Imperial Rome outvie;
And form a scene of statelier pomp - a Stowe.'
- Edge-Hill, Bk. IV.

Jago has also described Addison's country-seat at Bilton. He established his own kinship with Denham and Pope, two of his predecessors in topographical poetry -

'Not Windsor's royal scenes by Denham sung,
Or that more tuneful bard on Twickenham's shore,
Should boast a loftier strain.'

Jago paid tribute to his friend Shenstone in Edge-Hill (Bk. III) and in Lines to William Shenstone (1751). Jago's friendship with the bard of the Leasowes added keen relish to the enjoyment of garden-scenes. The Arcadianism of Shenstone exercised a wholesome influence upon his contemporaries by directing their minds towards the well-laid garden as a refuge from the multitudinous ills of life. The calm scene of Nature lulled the tumultuous heart of the poet to sweet composure in the midst of which he is seized by the moralizing spirit -

'Here the gliding stream,
That winds its watery path in many a maze,
As loth to leave the enchanted spot, invites
To moralise on fleeting time and life,
With all its treacherous sweets and fading joys.'
- Edge-Hill, Bk. II.

Nature impressed Jago with a mood of seriousness (Bk.IV).
Landscape's gay attire does not last long, and winter
dissipates all her charms. But such a mood does not
endure for long, and the poet bursts out into rapturous
descriptions of landscape -

'From the foot
Of this green mountain, far as human ken
Can reach, a theatre immense! adorned
With ornaments of sweet variety,
By Nature's pencil drawn - the level meads,
A verdant floor! with brightest gems inlaid,
And richly painted flowers - the tillaged plain,
Wide waving to the sun a rival blaze
Of gold, best source of wealth! the prouder hills,
With outline fair, in naked pomp displayed,
Round, angular, oblong; and others crowned
With graceful foliage. Over all her horn
Fair plenty pours, and cultivation spreads
Her brightening lustre.

--- The long ridged now
Or shapely pyramid, with conic roof,
Dressing the landscape.

To crown the beauteous scene, the curtain'd sky,
Its canopy divine of azure tint,
Spreads heavenly fair, and softens every charm.'
- Edge-Hill, Bk. II.

Pictorial descriptions of this nature abound in the
Edge-Hill; but these do not enhance the reputation of
Jago as a poet. Jago should have a niche in the Temple
of Fame by reason of the simple lyrical charm of his
Elegies and shorter pieces. His Elegies on the Blackbirds
and Goldfinches are marked by tenderness and sensibility.
We catch a faint romantic echo in these bird-lyrics. In
his Lines to William Shenstone, a tender lyrical note runs
through the description of Nature -

'Teach me to read fair Nature's book,
Wide opening in each flowery plain;
And with judicious eye to look
On all the glories of her reign

Whether the prospect strain the sight,
Or in the nearer landscapes charm,
Where hills, vales, fountains, woods unite,
To grace your sweet Arcadian farm.'

Jago's Elegy on Man is written entirely in a moralising strain, the recurring note being the transitoriness of human life and earthly pleasures.

Robert Dodsley (1703-1764) was another friend of Shenstone. Like Jago, Dodsley was indebted to Shenstone for his ideas of landscape-gardening. Dodsley wrote a long poem on Agriculture in three Cantos, delineating the pleasures of rural life -

'There sweet prospects rise
Of meadows smiling in their flowery pride,
Green hills and dales, and cottages embowered,
The scenes of innocence and calm delight.'

- Agriculture, Canto I. (1)

In Canto II Dodsley invokes the Genius of Gardens to come to Britain -

'where verdant plains
Where hills and dales, and woods and waters join
To aid thy pencils, favour thy designs,
And give thy varying landscapes every charm.'

Dodsley was stirred by the newly awakened ideas of landscape-gardening -

'And lo! the progress of thy steps appears
In fair improvements scattered round the land.'

Dodsley gives a brief account of the famous garden-houses of the eighteenth century - Chiswick, Richmond, Esher, Woburn and Hagley.

(1) Robert Dodsley, Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XV.

Dodsley's description of Lord Lyttleton's Hagley Park is charming -

'On Hagley's hills, irregular and wild,
Where through romantic scenes of hanging woods,
And valleys green, and rocks, and hollow dales,
While echo talks, and nymphs and dryads play.'

Dodsley's poem On Riches gives expression to the prevailing taste for painting and gardening. Sylvio is the lover of rural retreat and Publius of curious paintings -

'Sylvio retirement loves; smooth crystal floods,
Green meadows, hills and dales, and verdant woods
Delight his eye; the warbling birds to hear,
With rapture fills his soul, and charms his ear,
In shady walks, in groves, in secret bowers,
Planned by himself, he spends the peaceful hours.'

Publius consumes his wealth in curious paintings. Dodsley is here referring to the eighteenth century craze for collection of works of art.

Lord Lyttleton's country-seat of Hagley, which has been commemorated by Dodsley, was designed in the picturesque style with its Gothic ruin. As an amateur-gardener, Lord Lyttleton's name is associated with Shenston's, because both were neighbours and a sense of rivalry existed between them. Lord Lyttleton followed the practice of Shenstone in writing garden-poetry. He drew profuse images from the garden and depicted sylvan scenes. In his Third Eclogue to Mr. Edward Walpole he paints a perfect landscape. He tells us how Damon 'lay on a romantic mountain's airy head' which is the vantage-point for enjoying all the country-scenes - (1)

'The vale beneath a pleasing prospect yields
Of verdant meads and cultivated fields;
Through these a river rolls its winding flood,
Adorned with various tufts of rising wood;
Here half-concealed in trees, a cottage stands,
A castle there the opening plain commands;

(1) Lord Lyttleton in Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XIV.

Beyond a town with glittering spires is crowned
 And distant hills the wide horizon bound:
 So charming was the scene, awhile the swain
 Behold delighted, and forgot his pain.'

Like Claude, Lord Lyttleton was very fond of shades -

'Beneath the gloom of this embowering shade,
 This lone retreat, for tender sorrow made.
 - Monody to the Memory of Miss Alice
Fortescue

In his Eclogue to Mr. Pope there is another Claudian touch -

'To the green margin of a lonely wood,
 Whose pendent shades o'erlooked a silver flood.'

Lord Lyttleton was an admirer of Pope's pastoral poetry, and he was fond of using the commonplace epithets of pastoral poetry. He described 'Elysian bowers' twined with never-fading myrtles and fragrant with ambrosial flowers. His Eclogue to Bubb Dodington is written in a pastoral vein with the conventional properties of Damon, Delia and Cynthia. There are occasional touches of Oriental splendour, reminding us of Sir William Jones's poetry -

'From every branch the balmy flowerets rise;
 On every bough the golden fruits are seen;
 With odours sweet it fills the smiling skies,
 The wood-nymphs tend, and th' Idalian queen.'

- An Irregular Ode. (1)

Romantic wilderness of scenery had fascination for the poet -

(1) Lord Lyttleton, Works. Ed. Ayscough, 3 Vols., 1776

'Amid the mazy gloom
Of this romantic wilderness once stood
The bower of Rosamonda.'

- Blenheim.

Lord Lyttleton was a lover of the Gothic ruin which he introduced in his Hagley Park. There is a Gothic touch in his Epistle to Pope -

'some mouldering stone,
With ivy's venerable shade o'ergrown;
Those horrid ruins better pleased to see
Than all the pomp of modern luxury.'

The last line is significant because it contains a personal note. As he advanced in age Lord Lyttleton came to have a distaste for the pomp and glitter of life. He realised that country-life is fraught with joy and peace. His own country-seat of Hagley Park with all its picturesque beauty had a soothing effect upon his troubled mind. In his Lines to Lord Hervey there is a fling at the Grand Tour which was ^a craze ^{with} the men of fashion of the eighteenth century. He expresses his preference for the quiet joys of home-life to the pleasures of foreign travel. Lord Lyttleton had himself undertaken two Grand Tours on the Continent and we catch a poignant personal note in the following lines -

'So idle, so restless, are our minds,
We climb the Alps, and brave the raging winds;
Through various toils to seek content we roam,
Which with but thinking right were ours at home.

--- --- --- ---
Nor can the pure balm of foreign air
Heal the distempered mind of aching care.'

The poet found real balm in the exquisite scenery of England and Wales. He visited the castles and valleys of Wales, and was charmed by their beauty. He acquired

a strong taste for scenery and his descriptions are marked by accuracy. He was a lover of Nature in her gentler moods. In natural description he belongs to the school of Thomson - but of Thomson in his Claudian mood. In his Dialogues of the Dead, Lord Lyttleton puts the following praise of Thomson into the mouth of Pope -

'He (Thomson) painted more exactly, and with great strength of the pencil. His imagination was rich, extensive, and sublime : his diction bold and glowing.' Lord Lyttleton regarded the views of Plymouth and Dartmoor from Mount Edgcumbe as far more picturesque than the prospect of the Carnarvonshire mountains. 'This is characteristic of the taste of his day The love of Nature in her wilder moods was not yet part of English literature.' (1)

Lord Lyttleton shared the eighteenth century taste for the East. In 1735, he produced the Letters from a Persian in England to his friend at Ispahan. The influence of French literature was uppermost upon this piece of imaginative prose literature. Montesquieu's Lettres Persanes were the model on which these letters were written. Selim has been made to describe and criticise the contemporary taste in manners and morals of London society. - Lord Lyttleton expresses the Englishman's contempt for new-fangled Italian ideas, whether imported into architecture or cooking. - Later on, the same method was adopted, only under the guise of a Chinaman, by Goldsmith in his Chinese Letters (1760).

(1) A. H. Thomson - 'Thomson and Natural Description in Poetry' (Cambridge Hist. of Eng. Lit., Vol.X. p.115)

'Taken as a whole, the Persian Letters are thoroughly eighteenth Century and thoroughly English - ethical, didactic, insular.' (1)

The Scottish poet James Grainger (1723-67) drew his inspiration from abroad and was far more successful than Lord Lyttleton in representing the varied aspects of Nature. Grainger had been to the West Indies and was profoundly influenced by the scenery of that place. As a result, he wrote his long poem, Sugar-Cane. 'It is better read as a burlesque than as a serious work'. (2)

Just as Sir William had turned the eyes of men towards India and the East, Grainger familiarised the wild scenery of the West Indies. - 'the hurricane, the burning winds, a ripe cane-piece on fire at mid-night, and Indian prospect after a finished crop, and Nature in all the extreme of tropic exuberance.'

Grainger had an eye for the picturesque, and he was a lover of hills and seas, forming a background to green fields -

'So happiest he whose green plantation lies
Not from the hill too far, nor from the shore.'

- Sugar-Cane, Bk. I.

(1) (3)

The mountains had a special fascination for him and his descriptions of them are after the manner of Salvator Rosa -

'Though mountains heaped on mountains brave the sky'

✂ - Bk. III, l.17

'Alps piled on Alps, romantically high'

- Bk. IV, l.645

(1) S. C. Robert, An XVIIIth Cent. Gentleman and Other Essays. (Camb : 1930) p.16.

(2) Dr. Kitchin - The Language of Poetry : A Study of English Poetic Diction (D. Litt. Thesis, 1922).

(3) James Grainger in Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XIV

Grainger's vigorous description of the hurricane (Bk. II, ll. 270-286) reminds us of Thomson's Winter. The poet conceives the Muse with the pencil in her hand, riding on the back of the hurricane, and viewing the lightning's glare with dazzled eyes. The flood-gates of the sky are open; the Muse stands appalled; she cannot stem the 'shoreless deluge'. She sees the terrific scenes -

'The pillar'd flame, whose top hath reached the
stars;
Seen rocky, molten fragments, slung in air
From Etna's vext abyss; seen burning streams
Pour down its channel's side; tremendous scenes!'

Grainger's description of the 'savage East' contains another powerful picture of Nature in convulsion.

The East -

'Bids his winged tempests more relentless rave;
Now brighter, vaster coruscations flash;
Deepens the deluge; nearer thunders roll;
Earth trembles; Ocean reels; and, in her gangs,
Grim Desolation tears the shrieking isle.'
- Sugar-Cane, Bk. II, ll 354
-361.

Grainger's poem ends with a triumphal note of patriotism which is one of the principal features of eighteenth century poetry. In the concluding lines the poet gives a ruthless description of wild scenes, of weltering forces, out of which empires have sprung -

'Ah me, what thunders roll! the sky's on fire!
Now sudden darkness muffles up the pole!
Heavens! what wild scenes, before the affrighted
sense
Imperfect swim!- see! in that flaming scroll,
Which Time unfolds, the future germs bud forth
Of mighty empires! independent realms.'

- Sugar-Cane, Bk. IV. ll. 654-
657.

The terrific beauty and sublimity of the scenery in the West Indies was a prolific source of inspiration to Grainger. But the Sugar-Cane, on the whole, presents a complete picture of rural life. Like Mason's English Garden, it gives detailed descriptions of the different processes of cultivation. People of the eighteenth century were taking a lively interest in horticulture and plantations. The same theme which is uninviting with Grainger has been raised to a pitch of poetic intensity by Cowper in his Third Book of the Task. Any comparison between Cowper and Grainger will not be fair to the latter, but there is a closer analogy between the poems of Cowper and Mason. The poetry of both smacks of the soil; we hear the sound of the scythe; we are taken through the various arduous processes of cultivation. Interest in gardening in the eighteenth century is closely bound up with a general interest in the country and its development. A gentleman's life centred round his country-estate in this age, and notwithstanding the insipidity of Grainger's poem, it must have evoked some amount of response from the landowners of the period. Dr. Johnson said that Grainger was unfortunate in the choice of his subject and that the English reader would be bored by the poetical rendering of the cultivation of sugar-cane. If the last part of Johnson's criticism were true, Mason's poem would be equally boring. We have seen ⁱⁿ the previous chapter how Cowper also dressed up 'a cucumber' to critic appetite. Grainger's poem may also be compared with Darwin's Botanic Garden. Both poets in the prose-commentaries to their

respective poems, display a good deal of botanical lore, mixed up with quaint historical information.

In the midst of dry details of cultivation we come upon picturesque passages. Grainger has given us a glorious moon-lit scenery of the West Indies -

'The Moon, in virgin-glory, gilds the pole,
And tips yon tamarinds, tips yon cane-crowned vale,
With fluent silver; while unnumbered stars
Gild the vast concave with their lively beams,
The main, a moving burnished mirror, shines.'
- Sugar-Cane, Bk. IV, ll. 647-651)

In the Second Book the poet leads us through 'romantic scenes' between hills and woods, enchanting the senses.

The poet was keenly alive to the beauty of blooming verdure -

'ten thousand blooms,
Which, their fragrant scents, perfume the air,
Burst into being; while the canes put on
Glad Nature's liveliest robe, the vivid green.'

Grainger was a lover of solitude. In his Ode to Solitude, which according to Dr. Johnson is 'sufficient to attest his claim to poetical honours', Grainger addresses solitude as 'romantic maid' haunting the desert's trackless gloom. Inspiration comes in the solitary wild. It is in the midst of solitude that the charms of Nature appear enhanced in the poet's eyes -

'With you roses brighter bloom,
Sweeter every sweet perfume,
Purer every fountain flows
Stronger every wilding glows.'

Grainger had a Gothic vein of melancholy in him. He wanted to retire to a region covered with cypress and made vocal with the hooting of owl and the flitting of bats. He took joy in 'the heart-felt harmony of woe'. There is an expression of uncanny delight in the following lines -

'Let us with Retirement go
To charnels, and the house of woe.'

Besides his long poem on Sugar-Cane, Grainger wrote an Ode to Solitude and The Ballad of Bryan and Percene, called the West Indian ballad. According to Dr. Johnson these two poems are 'sufficient to attest his claim to poetical honours'. The opening lines of the Ballad remind us of Coleridge's Ancient Mariner -

'The north east wind did briskly blow,
The ship was safely moor'd,
Young Bryan thought the boat's crew slow
And so leapt overboard.'

Grainger's Ode to Solitude also deserves mention. It was characterised by Dr. Johnson as 'noble' and by Percy as an assemblage of 'some of the sublimest images in nature'.

As a writer of rural poetry John Langhorne's (1735-79) position is far higher than that of Grainger. His poem called Studley Park is a description of the ineffable joys of rural life. The poet viewed the country as a painted landscape. Like Claude, he was deeply influenced by 'arching shades' -

'The varying scene still charms the attentive sight
Or brown with shades, or opening into light.' (1)

Langhorne places the joys of country-life above those of sculpture and architecture -

'Her towering domes let Richmond boast alone;
The sculptured statue and the breathing stone:
Alone distinguished on the plains of Stowe,
From Jones's hand the featured marble glow,
--- --- ---
Unenvied, Studley, be this pomp of art
'Tis thine the power to please a virtuous heart.'

The poet's simple expression of joy at the sight of the landscape is charming -

(1) John Langhorne in Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVI.

'What joys expand my breast! what rapture warms!
 While all the landscape opens all its charms:
 While pleased I see, the parting shades between,
 The lake fair-gleaming and the smoother green;
 Through lowly grotts where wandering shadows stray,
 Groves gently wave, and glistening waters play.'

Langhorne's pastoral poem Genius and Valour, written in honour of Scotland is rich in Scottish scenery and descriptions of picturesque places in Scotland. The poet pays compliment to 'gentle Henryson's unlaboured strain' and to Thomson, 'the child of Nature' who drew his inspiration from Scotland's 'flowery sides'. He also described the wild magnificence of Scotland's snows.

Langhorne was born in the picturesque atmosphere of Westmoreland and wrote an Ode to the Genius of this place. He confesses that he caught the sacred fire from the genius of this place. He was a lover of the formal garden and watched with distrust the winding and serpentine methods of Sir William Chambers in the Kew Gardens -

'The whims and zig-zag of a modern brain,
 More than all Asia's marmosets to view
 Grin, frisk and water in the walks of Kew.'

He was also opposed to the introduction of the Chinese taste in gardening. He expresses his anti-Chinese attitude in his Country-Justice (1774), a poem in three parts -

'For tho' no sight your childish fancy meets
 Of Thibet's dogs, or China's perroquets
 --- --- --- ---
 And all the tribes of foreign monsters fail.

This poem is a faithful picture of the rural life of England. In minuteness of details it is an anticipation

of Crabbe. Crabbe was, however, superior to him in the strength of his pencil. Langhorne's Farewell Hymn to the Valley of Irwan has a tender lyrical charm in its description of the simple objects of Nature -

'The primrose on the valley's side,
The green thyme on the mountain's head,
The wanton rose, the daisy pied,
The wilding's blossom blushing red.'

Langhorne was not alone among the minors in his aversion to the Chinese taste. Samuel Boyse (1708-1749) in his garden-poem on the Triumph of Nature refers to Chinese and Japanese tastes -

'Eastward, the spacious pond relieves the sight;
In which, of form Chinese, a structure lies,
Where all her wild grotesques display surprise,
Within Japan, her glittering treasure yields,
And ships of amber sail on golden fields.
In radiant clouds are silver turrets formed,
And mimic glories glitter all around.'

Boyse wrote this poem on the magnificent gardens at Stowe in Buckinghamshire, the seat of Lord Cobham. The poem opens with a rapturous invocation to Nature. Boyse profusely borrows metaphors from painting for illustrating his garden-scenes. The following is a happy poetical rendering of the methods of Kent and Brown -

'As the skill'd painter captivates the sight,
By nicely intermingling shade and light;
So in these happy scenes, each object placed,
Throws beauty round, and charms the finest taste;
So just the contrasts - and the point so true,
'Tis all that Nature, all that Art can do.' (1)

Boyse peopled his landscapes with classical deities, Bacchus, Semele, Actaeon, Venus, Cupid and Phoebus.

Boyse wrote many poems on the gardens and parks of Scotland. His poem called Nature (1732) was

(1) Samuel Boyse in Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XIV

occasioned by the sight of the park and palace of Dalkeith, and his Retirement is a description of the palace and park of Yester. From the summit of a rising hill the poet saw Lothian's fertile vale at a distance and the long landscape mingling with the skies. His Loch Rian (1734) is crowded with the scenic beauties of Scotland -

'What airy prospects! what romantic views!
Surprise the fancy, and inspire the Muse!'

Among the band of poets who wrote discursive poems on painting, Walter Harte (1709-74) is one. In his Essay on Painting he says that Painting withdrew from Greece and sought the Italian shade, giving the exact correctness to Titian, nice judgment to Raphael, design to Michael Angelo and warmth to Correggio. He establishes a close connection between the sister-arts by showing that colours in painting, words in poetry and rural images in Nature all convey pleasure to the imagination -

'Colours like words, with equal care are sought,
These please the sight, and those express the
thought,
But most of all, the landscape seems to please
With calm repose and rural images.'

(1)

These ideas had been familiarised to the English reader by Mason in his translation of DuFresnoy. Harte claims originality by saying that he wrote this poem before he saw DuFresnoy. He was not influenced by the principles of Laocoon; he held that whatever holds true in painting holds good in poetry too:

'Each on each reflects the lights of art.'

(1) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVI

This is a succinct expression of the mutual reflections of the arts one upon the other, which is the most vital thing in eighteenth century taste. Cowper also voiced the same sentiment by admiring the painter's magic skill which 'throws Italian light on English walls'. Recognising the claims of Art to be Heaven-born, Harte asks the artist to avoid over-much refinement giving 'cold delight by which Art is lost'. Like Pope, he held that Nature first should be the artist's darling care -

'Art from this source derives her true designs,
And sober judgment cautiously refines.'

It is cautious refinement which was mostly needed for eighteenth century taste. In gardening, excessive formalism was giving place to healthy naturalism; in poetry, the Muse was trying to retire to Nature. Harte appeals to the Muses to bear the artist to sequestered woods -

'To balmy grottoes, and to silver floods.

Where Nature's beauties variously unite,
And in a landscape open on the sight.'

The relationship between Nature and Art which had engaged the attention of Kent and Pope has been touched upon by Harte. Nature descends from Heaven as 'one clear perfection', 'one eternal flame'. Art flows from an all-inspiring grace which can neither be expressed or defined -

'Framed in the brain, it flows with easy art,
Steals on the sense, and wins the yielding heart,
A pleasing vigour, mixt with boldness charms,
And happiness completes what passion warms.'

In his short poem on Soliloquy, occasioned by the chirping of a grasshopper, the poet conceives Nature as waiting upon living creatures with her balmy wines extracted from dewy flowers.

Matthew Green's Grotto (1732) was a contribution to the taste for grottoes in this century. Pope's famous grotto in Twickenham was highly praised by Dr. Johnson. When a grotto was built for Queen Caroline in the Richmond Gardens, it became a fashion with the minor poets of the day to write verses on this subject, some in a ~~courtly~~ courtly and some in a satirical strain. A considerable number of these may be found in the early volumes of the Gentleman's Magazine. Green praises Queen Caroline's grotto higher than the Windsor Castle or the Hampton Court. Green eulogises Lord Burlington who was one of the arbiters of taste in this century. In describing the imaginative pleasure derived from sculpture, Green was influenced by the theories of Addison -

'The thinking sculpture helps to raise
 Deep thoughts, the genii of the place;
 To the mind's ear, and inward sight,
 Their silence speaks, and shade gives light.' (1)

Green's more ambitious poem is The Spleen. Written in the form of a poetical Epistle, it was first published in 1737, a short time after the poet's death. Afterwards it was taken with other poems into Dodsley's volumes. The poem is full of many original and happy imageries. Gray lavished unmeasured praise on Green's poem - 'His wood-notes often break out into strains of real poetry and music'.

Music and Gardening have been prescribed by the poet as two excellent remedies against the access of the spleen. There is one landscape-passage in the purely conventional manner. There is also a hit at the formal critics of art who -

'Invent cramped rules, and with straight stays
Striving free Nature's shape to hit,
Emaciate sense, before they hit.'

Armstrong's The Art of Preserving Health (1744), (1)
a didactic poem, may be mentioned in connection with Green's Grotto. Armstrong advises city-people to retire to Hampstead, or Greenwich or Dulwich. In considering the varieties of air and exercise, he has seized many happy occasions for picturesque description. Warton praised the poem for its classical correctness and poetical images. Armstrong was among the literary descendants of Thomson from whom he borrowed some similes. Critics, following Mr. Saintsbury, refer to Armstrong's 'gelid cistern' (cold bath) as the supreme example of poetic diction in the eighteenth century or the neo-classic grandiose. Mr. Barbauld, writing in 1810, (Introduction to Akenrides Pleasures of the Imagination, p.4.), half admires the ingenuity with which 'These didactic writers avoid using realistic language.' -

'We are delighted to find with how much dexterity the artist of verse can avoid a technical term, how neatly he can turn an uncouth word and with how much grace and embellish a scientific idea. Who does not admire the infinite art with which Dr. Erasmus Darwin has described the machine of Sir Richard Arkwright....Even the loathsomeness of disease and the dry maxims of medical knowledge have been decorated with the charms of poetry'.

(1)
Armstrong in Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVI.

Armstrong also wrote a poem called Taste : An Epistle to a Young Critic (1753). To him good native taste, though rude, is the correct standard in music, painting and poetry. (1) The poem is written in a jolting, rollicking vein. It is a good performance and makes lively reading.

In his short poem Progne's Dream he has depicted a horror-scene -

'A hideous kind of wilderness,
Where stood a stern and prison-looking rock,
Daubed with a mossy verdure all around,
The mockery of paint.

The last line indicates that Armstrong had not seen the paintings of Salvator Rosa.

Richard Glover's (1712-85) poetry is an instance of the predominance of classical taste in the eighteenth century. He wrote ponderous epics, Leonidas and Athenaid, which were warmly received by his contemporaries. Glover's poetry does not show any taste for the picturesque. In his short poem on London, he has given us a classical description of the rock and grotto -

'The solem shade
Half round a spacious lawn at length expands,
Clos'd by a towering cliff, whose forehead glows
With azure, purple, and ten thousand dyes,
From its resplendent fragments beaming round.'

(2)

(1) The poet maintains that personal judgment ought to be the final factor in the matter of appreciation of the arts -

'But, in the name of goodness, must I be
The dupe of charms I never yet could see?'

(2) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVII.

William Wilkie (1721-72), popularly known as 'Scottish Homer', is another poet with classical taste, whose long poem, The Epigoniad is devoid of all elements of the picturesque. He had a taste for farming, and he studied agriculture, acquiring the reputation of a practical farmer. We catch a Wordsworthian ring in a few of his occasional pieces. In The Grasshopper and Glowworm, Nature appeared to him, as to Wordsworth, the only book of wisdom -

'Nature's broad volume fairly spread,
Where all true science might be read;
The wisdom of the Eternal Mind
Declared and published to mankind.' (1)

The following description of the all-powerful influence of Nature is an anticipation of Wordsworth -

'While few attempt to catch those rays
Of truth which Nature still displays
Throughout the universal plan,
From moss and mushroom up to Man'

These stray notes in praise of Nature indicate that love of Nature was not absent in this age, even in the minds of those who were steeped in classicism with all its conventions.

William Hamilton of Bangour (1704-54), another Scottish poet of greater originality, was also a lover of gardening. He was a fast friend of Lord Kames, the famous critic of taste. In his Lines to the Countess of Eglinton (1726) Hamilton dwells upon the joys of rural life. His odes are marked by elegant fancy and chastened taste. His Ode to Fancy is full of lyrical charm -

'Or on the rose's silken hem
Aurora weeps her earliest gem;
Or beneath the opening dawn,
Smiles the fair-extended lawn.' (2)

(1) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVI.

(2) Ibid, Vol. XV

In his Flowers : A Fragment he sings in praise of gardens -

'The care of gardens, and the garden's pride
To rear the blooming flowers, invites the Muse.'

He wrote many short snatches of poetry on the garden -

On a Summer-House in my own Garden, On a Dial in My
Garden, On an Obelisk in my Garden.

Hamilton's masterpiece is the ballad of 'The
Braes of Yarrow showing his intimate love of Nature
tender sensibility and simple vein of pastoralism.
Here he anticipated Wordsworth's Yarrow poems.

John Cunningham's (1729-73) poetry is marked by
the same naturalness of sentiment, elegance of thought
and simplicity of language. He had an eye for natural
beauty. He contemplated Nature with minute attention
and familiarised his mind with rural scenes and images.
His poem called Landscape shows accurate observation of
Nature and accumulation of beauties, clothed in sweet verse -

'Nature in the prospect yields,
Humble dales and mountains bold,
Meadows, woodlands, heaths, and fields
Yellow'd o'er with waving gold.' (1)

The whole poem is a succession of beautiful rural scenes
of -

'Painted gardens, grots and groves,
Intermingling shade and light;
Lengthen'd vistas, green alcoves,
Join to give the eye delight.'

Cunningham admitted that Shenstone had encouraged him to
write descriptions of rural scenes. In his Content : A
Pastoral, he points out that his Muse was inspired by
pastoral views. His taste for the Gothic is seen in
his Elegy on a Pile of Ruins.

(1) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XIV

Soame Jenyns (1703-87) is another elegant writer on country-life. He resembles Cowper in his sheer joy in country-life which he contrasts with the poor pleasures of the city -

'How happy was a country-life!
How free from wickedness and strife!
Then each man lived upon his farm,
And thought and did no mortal harm.'

- Epistle Written in the Country (17)

The poet deplores contemporary party-rage firing every village. We breathe the fresh air of the country in his Lines to a Lady, sent with a present of shells and stones designed for a grotts. He delighted in gardens and grottoes -

'Here verdant plains and blooming flowers will
grow,
There bubbling currents through the shell-works
flow;
Here coral mixed with shells of various dyes,
There polished stones will charm our wondering
eyes,
Delightful bower of bliss! Secure retreat!'

In such a bower of the lady, the Muse will be her companion and good sense her guide. There is tender lyrical charm in his Nosegay where the happy flowers are addressed as 'short-lived sons of vernal showers', shining in the 'fragrant Cyprian grove'. In the poem called An Ode there is a charming description of the Seasons-

'Now lovely Spring her velvet mantle spreads,
And paints with green and gold the flowery
meads.'

There was a great vogue for pastoral poetry in the eighteenth century. John Pomfret's (1667-1702) The Choice, published in 1700, enjoyed remarkable popularity for more than a century. The actual contribution to the rural poetry of the time is very small. In neat verses, the

(1) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVII.

poem celebrates the quiet joys of a country retirement. There are slight touches of the beauty of an English landscape -

'Near some fair town I'd have a private seat
Built uniform, nor little, nor too great;
Better, if on a rising ground it stood;
On this side fields, on that a neighbouring
wood.'

'A little garden, grateful to the eye;
And a cool rivulet
On whose delicious banks a stately row
Of shady limes, or sycamores, should grow.'

Southey asked the question, 'Why is Pomfret's Choice the most popular poem in the language?' (1) We may solve this question by saying that it contained in form the essential elements of eighteenth century landscape-poetry and the same calm outlook on life. The longing for a home in pleasant surroundings in the country is one of the distinguishing features of the century.

Pomfret's poem shows the first dawn of such longing. A modest house, with wood, garden and stream, a competent estate and the enjoyment of lettered ease and happiness, - ~~all the~~ all the elements of eighteenth century poetry are found here.

Ambrose Philips's name stood very high in the list of pastoral poets of his age. His six Pastorals were published before 1708, and were prior to Pope's Pastorals. Spenser was Philips's model, and in the delineation of pastoral scenes, he is more natural than Pope. Addison liked his poetry; and he was highly praised by The Guardian. In his Preface to the Pastorals he connects painting with poetry and throws much light on contemporary taste -

(2)

(1) Southey - Specimens of the Later English Poets, Vol. I. p. 91.

(2) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XIII

'As in painting, so in poetry, the country affords not only the most delightful scenes and prospects, but likewise the most pleasing images of life... To view a fair stately palace, strikes us indeed with admiration, and swells the soul with notions of grandeur: but when I see a little country-dwelling, advantageously situated amidst a beautiful variety of hills, meadows, fields, woods and rivulets, I feel an unspeakable sort of satisfaction, and cannot forbear wishing my kinder fortune would place me in such a sweet retirement.'

John Gay (1685-1732) contributed to the rural poetry of the period. His Shepherd's Week (1714) was a travesty of Ambrose Philip's sham pastorals and it was intended to paint 'rustic life with the gilt off'. (1) He, however, did not succeed in giving a realistic interpretation of country-life. His rural pictures are a mixture of fancy and truth; but they contain 'much curious and valuable information concerning rural customs, rural employments, rural songs, rural amusements, and rural superstitions'. (2)

There are some passages where, in describing rustic life, the poet is tempted to give descriptions of rural scenery as forming a background. In the opening lines of the First Pastoral we get a picture of the country at early dawn. In the Third Eclogue there are two pictures of early evening, the one before sunset, and other after sunset. -

'Now the Sun drove adown the western road,
And oxen, laid at rest, forgot the goad,
The clown, fatigued, trudg'd homeward with
his spade,
Across the meadows stretch'd the lengthen'd
shade.'

(Ecl. III. 19-22).

(1) A. Dobson, Ward's Eng. Poets. III. p.145.

(2) Under ~~him~~ in Introductory Memoir to Gay's Poem, p.xxx.

'The sun was set; the night came on - a pall,
 And falling dew bewet around the place,
 The bat takes airy rounds on leathern wings,
 And the hoarse owl his woful dirges sings.'
 (Ecl. III. 115-118)

In the last pastoral, the poet has depicted a harvest-scene, as a background to the incidents of the poem.
 (IV. 7-16).

Gay's love of the country is also seen in an earlier poem, The Rural Sports (1713). The poet begins with a reference to Pope's quiet, happy life in his country-retreat. Gay contrasts this with his own lot in the corrupt town. He expresses his desire to quit the town, because it is the country alone which can 'sooth (his) harass'd mind with sweet repose'. The country 'breathes delight' on him. In describing the sun-set, he gives expression to the sensations called up in his soul by the contemplation of Nature's pageant - (ll. 101 et seq.)

'Far in the deep the sun his glory hides,
 A streak of gold the sea and sky divides;
 The purple clouds their amber linings show,
 And, edg'd with flame, rolls ev'ry wave below:
 Here pensive I behold the fading light
 And o'er the distant billow lose my sight.'

Gay's contemplative mood in these lines reminds us of Wordsworth -

'To her fair works did Nature link
 The human soul that through me ran'.

In the same passage, Gay gives us a sea-picture.

In 1713 Gay wrote another noteworthy poem, A Contemplation on Night. Here the light and colour of the morning have been contrasted with the darkness of the night. In the morning picture, Gay shows his love of mountains -

'The barren cliffs with chalky fronts arise,
And a pure azure arches o'er the skies.'
(11. 11-12).

Taste for wild scenery was gradually coming in to vogue in the eighteenth century.

Thomas Parnell's (1679-1718) poetry shows interest in rural scenery and in the phenomena of external nature. Parnell was sensitive to the beauty of the country, in its milder aspects. He does not describe Nature for her own sake, but as a background to the main theme of his poems. In his Health ; an Eclogue, there is an idyllic picture of country-life, with all its quiet joys. He describes rural sports and cheerful sights and sounds of spring and early summer. Parnell shows his love of Gardens by recommending a well-trimmed garden as the best place for the enjoyment of 'calm content'.

v Parnell's most ambitious poem, A Night-Piece on Death, describing the solemnity of night in the churchyard, reminds us of Young's Night-Thoughts. He has painted the churchyard scene with great minuteness. The deep blue sky with stars and moon has been reflected on the tranquil, transparent lake on a summer night; the rising ground on the other side of the lake merges into darkness; the wall of the graveyard is being laved by silent water; the moonlight is gleaming on the church-steeple; - all these details of the solemn scene supply good material for a painter. (1)

(1) Thomas Parnell, Poetical Works, Ed. J. Mitford, Lond: 1833

John Hughes (1677-1720), ranked with the 'mediocrits' by Dr. Johnson, published the works of Spenser in six Volumes in 1715. This was the only complete edition published in the first half of the century, and a second edition was not called for until 1750. His attraction for Spenser was one of his romantic traits. Besides his contributions to The Spectator, The Tatler and The Guardian, he wrote some descriptive verses, showing his susceptibility to rural beauty. In his Monumental Ode he takes a panoramic view of the wide prospect -

'Sees Hertford's ancient town, and lands
Where Nature's hand in slow meanders leads
The Lee's clear stream its course to flow
Through flowery vales, and moistened meads,
And far around in beautiful prospects spread
Her map of plenty all below.'

In his Ode in the Park at Asted, he describes a pleasant rural scene in summer. The poet has screened himself from the heat beneath a spreading elm and views the yellow harvest of neighbouring fields which are crowned with plenty. The sky overhead is fair and unclouded. The wood, 'the park's romantic scene', the deer playing on 'tuff's perpetual green' are various objects of his delight. In his poem To Mr. Constantine, on his Paintings he praises the pictures of landscapes -

'Here tufted groves rise boldly to the sky,
There spacious lawns more distant charm the eye;
The crystal lakes in borrow'd tinctures shine,
And misty hills the fair horizon join,
Lost in the azure borders of the day,
Like sounds remote that die in air away,
The peopled prospect various pleasure yields,
Sheep grace the hills, and herds or swains the
fields.'

These lines are not more mediocre than any other 'hill'-poetry of the period.

William Pattison (1706-1727) wrote two poems on country-life. The first of these, The Jealous Shepherd, was written in close imitation of Gay's Shepherd's Week. The second poem, The Morning Contemplation, shows genuine love of Nature. The poem opens thus -

'As I range these spacious fields,
Feast on all that nature yields;
Ev'ry thing conspires delight,
Charms my smell, my taste, my sight;
Ev'ry rural sound I hear
Soothes my soul, and tunes my ear.' (1)
- Anderson Vol. VIII. p.566 c.i.

The simple and direct language of the poem reminds us of Dyer's Grouse Hill which he might have read before composing his poem. Both poems show the same keen enjoyment of rural sights and sounds. Like Wordsworth, Pattison was struck with a sense of contrast between the beauty of rural scene and man's ingratitude.

John Byrom (1691-1763) comes under the class of pastoral poets who wrote simple descriptions of rural life. His pastoral Colin and Phebe has the stamp of natural simplicity. His mind was well-stored with picturesque images and original turns of thought. In his long poem, called Enthusiasm (1751) we notice the influence of Shaftesbury. In the prose preface he says -

'Enthusiasm has grown into a fashionable term of reproach, that usually comes uppermost, when anything of a deep or serious nature is mentioned'. (2)

He describes the classical enthusiasts, virtuosos and connoisseurs in a humorous vein. According to him these people are all swayed by their own conceit -

(1) Not included in Chalmers. It was reprinted in Anderson. Vol. VIII.

(2) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XV.

'Critics with all their learning recondite,
Poets, that sev'rally be-mused write;
The virtuosos, whether great or small;
The connoisseurs, that know the worth of all.'

Byrom wrote some devotional pieces full of genuine religious feeling and he is a predecessor of Cowper in this kind of poetry.

William Thompson had a highly developed sense of the picturesque. Spenser was his acknowledged model and he took a picturesque view of Spenser's poetry. In the interesting preface to his Hymn to May he says -

'As Spenser is the most descriptive and florid of all our English writers, I attempted to imitate his manner in this vernal poem.....Shakespeare is the poet of Nature, in adapting the affections and passions to his characters; and Spenser in describing her delightful scenes and rural beauties.....His descriptions are most delicately abundant, even to a wantonness of painting : but still it is the music and painting of Nature.' (1)

Painting had great influence upon him and he regarded Spenser as essentially a painter. The objects of Nature appeared to him as if painted on the canvas -

'The earth's embroidery then have ye eyed,
The smile of blossoms, yellow, purple, white;
The vernal-tinctured leaves, luxurious dy'd,
In Flora's liv'ry, painted by the light
Light's painted children in the breezes play.'

Thompson was an enthusiastic lover of Nature and we catch an accent of rapture in the following invocation -

'Ye hills, ye plains, ye groves, ye streams, ye glages,
Ye ever-happy scenes! all you, your poet hails.'

(1) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol.XV

Robert Lloyd (1733-81) followed the Miltonic manner in his poem To the Moon, and the entire body of his poetry is full of Miltonic reminiscences. He possessed neither originality of thought nor elegance of style. But he deserves our attention by reason of his attempt to analyse the taste of his time. In his Ode to Genius (1760), he mourns the loss of genuine poetic fire in the XVIIIth century and condemns the false taste of the time -

'Taste with absolute domain,
Extending wide her leaden reign,
Kills with her melancholy shade,
The blooming scyons of fair Fancy's tree.'

In his Epistle to J. B. (1757), he condemns the taste for rigidly following the critical canons -

'The modern rules obstruct perfection,
And the severity of Taste
Has laid the walk of genius waste.'

Applying this principle to the case of Shakespeare, he says -

'Had Shakespeare crept by modern rules,
W'd lost his witches, fairies, fools;
Instead of all that wild creation
H'd form'd a regular plantation
A garden trim, and all enclos'd,
In nicest symmetry disposed.'

The last lines show that he was an enemy of the formal garden.

Robert Blair's (1699-1747) name deserves passing mention because there are bits of nature-poetry in his melancholy poem, The Grave ⁽¹⁷⁴³⁾ -

'Upon the sloping cowslip-covered bank,
Where the pure limpid stream has slid along
In grateful errors through the underwood,
Sweet-murmuring.'

(2)

(1) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XV.

(2) Ibid.

Blair's Grave inspired William Blake to undertake a series of twelve illustrative designs. As a man of taste, Blair was deeply interested in architecture and he gives a vivid description of the Pyramids -

'The tapering Pyramid, the Egyptian's pride,
And wonder of the world, whose spiky top
Has wounded the thick cloud, and long out-
liv'd
The angry shaking of the winter's storm.'

William Somerville (1692-1742) took a vigorous interest in rural life and he has given us a powerful description of the rural sports in his Chase, (1735). In the opinion of Dr. Johnson, Somerville conveyed familiar images in laboured language. But the Chase is not altogether devoid of picturesque touches -

'The flowery landscape, and the gilded dome,
And vistas opening to the wearied eye,
Through all his wide domain; the planted
grove,
The shrubby wilderness, with its gay choir
Of warbling birds.'

(1)

Somerville gives a higher place to such a landscape over the masterpieces of architecture or painting. The simple sights and sounds of a country are fraught with far more tremendous appeal than heroes frowning from marble pedestals or Titian's lively tints. In the concluding lines of the poem the poet makes the whole countryside ring with the echo of hounds and horn -

'fields, woods and streams,
Each towering hill, each humble vale below,
Shall hear my cheering voice, my hounds shall
wake
The lazy morn, and glad the horizon round.'

(1) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XI.

The poem is interspersed with classical touches. The poet believed that deities presided over hill and stream -

'Ye Naiads fair, who o'er these floods preside,
Raise up your dripping heads above the wave,
And hear our melody

Nor quires of Tritons glad with sprightlier
The dancing billows, when proud Nature rides strains
In triumph o'er the deep.'

- The Chase, Bk. IV.

His Hobbinol or Rural Games (1740) has been treated in a burlesque vein, the unpleasant side of the country sports being greatly exaggerated. He was indebted to Philips's Cyder for his description of the country dance, which is a forceful passage in the poem.

He looked upon the country only as the scene of his sport, and never tried to depict it for its own sake. He had the gift for lively description.

Thomas Tickell (1686-1740) occupies a high position among the minor poets. His Kensington Gardens,⁽¹⁷²²⁾ written in smooth and elegant versification is a contribution to the garden-poetry of the period. The smooth and soothing beauty of the garden has been expressed in the velvet polish of his verse -

'Where Kensington, high o'er the neighbouring lands,
Midst greens and sweets, a regal fabric stands,
And sees each spring, luxuriant in her bowers,
A snow of blossoms, and a wild of flowers

Each walk, with robes of various dyes bespread,
Seems from afar a moving tulip-bed,
Where rich brocades and glossy damasks glow.' (1)

The poet has mixed up Grecian deities with Gothic fairies in a maladroit manner. In his poem, called Fairies, the

(1) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XI.

poet complains that the landscape is not so sweet today
as it was in days of yore -

'The landscape now so sweet we well may praise:
But far, far sweeter in its ancient days,
Far sweeter was it, when its peopled ground
With Fairy domes and dazzling towers were crowned.'

Tickell was predominantly classical in his tastes and he again praises the beautiful prospects of the ancient world in his well-known lines To the Earl of Warwick on the Death of Mr. Addison -

'How sweet were once ~~thy~~ thy prospects fresh
and fair,
Thy sloping walks, and unpolluted air!
How sweet the glooms beneath thy aged trees,
Thy noon-tide shadow, and thy evening breeze.'

Like Thomas Warton, Tickell also came under the potent spell of the Middle Ages, the glories of which he celebrates in his Ode inscribed to the Earl of Sunderland at Windsor. He makes the glittering pageant of mediaeval chivalry pass before our eyes. In his pastoral poem, Colin and Lucy, Tickell has conveyed a sense of mediaeval mystery and supernaturalism, reminding us of Coleridge -

'Three times all in the dead of night,
A bell was heard to ring;
And shrieking at her window thrice,
The raven flapped his wing.

Edward Lovibond (1724-1775) was an amateur poet, living as a gentleman of fortune in the picturesque place near Hampton in Middlesex. Having inherited a competence from his father, he passed his days in the enjoyment of rural beauties. He is one among the many gentlemen - gardeners of his age who preferred the life of retirement in the country to party-strife.

In his Ode to Youth, Lovibond invokes the aid of Nature -

'Come, ye gales that swell the flowers,
Wake my soul's expanding powers;
Come, by streams embowered in wood,
Celestial forms, the fair, the good

Sculpture, Painting, meet my eyes,
Glowing still with young surprise.'

(1)

Of the poems which Lovibond contributed to the World, the best-known piece is The Tears of Old May-Day (1754) containing some fine images -

'Saw bursting clouds eclipse the noon-tide
beams,
While sounding billows from the mountains roll'd,
With bitter waves polluting all my streams
My nectar'd streams, that flowed on sands of
gold.'

In his Imitation from Ossian's Poems he has depicted some horror-scenes -

'Brown Autumn nods upon the mountains head,
The dark mist gathers; howling winds
assail
The blighted desert; on its mineral bed
Dark rolls the river through the sullen
vale.'

Edward Moore is a writer of garden-poetry. ~~The~~
During the publication of the World, Moore wrote some
light pieces and songs for the public gardens. His
poetry is simple and smooth like Tickell's. In his
Discovery : An Ode to Pelham, He praises 'Esher's peace-
ful seat'. (2)

(1) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVI.

(2) Ibid, Vol. XIV.

Richard Owen Cambridge (1717-1802) was another contributor to the World. He lived in his country-seat in Gloucestershire. In 1751 he removed to Twickenham where he enjoyed the society of many notable persons. His chief work is The Scribleriad (1751), a mock-epic poem, the hero of which is the Martinus Scriblerus of Pope, Arbuthnot, and Swift. The smiling face of Nature appealed to Cambridge -

'Gold buds and branches on the radiant trees,
And the melting music floats on every breeze

Eternal verdure clothes the cloud-topped hills,
In tuneful measure fall the tinkling rills,
Rubies and emeralds load the teeming groves,
Where vocal phoenixes record their loves.'

- Bk. II.

(1)

The Claudian influence on him is discernible in the following picture -

'Deep in the dark recesses of the wood
A cave obscured with gloomy laurels stood,
Ivy within, the verdant roof o'erspread
With pendant foliage, a luxuriant shade.'

Salvatorial horror-scenes depicting the destructive forces of Nature are very common in his poetry -

'When lo! deep clouds, with sable horrors rise,
And, lowering, menace from the western skies;
Impetuous winds, old ocean's face deform,
The vessel drives before the swelling storm.'

'Loud thunders the rent rock; and from within,
Out rush, resistless, with impetuous din,
The hoarse rude winds; and sweeping o'er the land,
Incircling eddies whirl the uplifted sand.'

The Gothic revival of his time did not pass unnoticed -

'See how her sons with generous ardour strive,
Bid ev'ry long-lost Gothic art revive.
Each British science studiously explore:
Their dress, their buildings, and their coins
restore.'

(1) Chalmers, English Poets, Vol. XVIII.

Cambridge has enlivened his pages with many Eastern touches. He refers to 'Arabia's spicy borders' wherefrom 'spring the Eastern breezes.' He wrote an Oriental poetical tale, The Fakeer which is a satire on the religion of the East. His insight into the spirit of China's religion is seen from his description of the Chinese saint. The Fakeer shows the permeation of the Chinese influence through the poetry of the minors. In the preface he tells us that he borrowed the plan from Voltaire.

John Reynolds, the great art-critic, combined in himself the highly technical knowledge of the painter with a philosophic grasp of general principles. There was a general tendency in this age to fix the fluctuating principles of taste. This is seen in the attempts of Hogarth and Repton in two different departments of art. The professed aim of Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty was to give body and shape to the floating ideas of taste. Such was also Repton's aim in his Sketches and Hints on landscape-gardening. Shenstone, the poet-gardener, also wrote in prose laying down his views on landscape-gardening. Sir Joshua, Repton and Shenstone wrote with the air of the polished gentleman, avoiding the technicalities of painting and gardening. As discussions on taste were very popular in the eighteenth century, the elegant works of these men appealed equally to masters of art, connoisseurs and ordinary readers. MacKen's English Garden is a typical example of poetical discussion on taste. Burke's treatment of aesthetics is more profound and comprehensive. Gerard, Alison, Kames and Price followed the combined methods of

CONCLUSION

In the first chapter we have seen that art-criticism was one of the prominent features of the eighteenth century. Aestheticism began with Shaftesbury whose influence passed on silently to the poets, philosophers and aesthetic critics of the age. Shaftesbury and Jonathan Richardson both insisted on people being lovers of painting as a sure means for the formation of sound taste. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great art-critic, combined in himself the highly technical knowledge of the painter with a philosophic grasp of general principles. There was a general tendency in this age to fix the fluctuating principles of taste. This is seen in the attempts of Hogarth and Repton in two different departments of art. The professed aim of Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty was to give body and shape to the floating ideas of taste. Such was also Repton's aim in his Sketches and Hints on landscape-gardening. Shenstone, the poet-gardener, also wrote in prose laying down his views on landscape-gardening. Sir Joshua, Repton and Shenstone wrote with the air of the polished gentleman, avoiding the technicalities of painting and gardening. As discussions on taste were very popular in the eighteenth century, the elegant works of these men appealed ^uequally to masters of art, connoisseurs and ordinary readers. Mason's English Garden is a typical example of poetical discussion on taste. Burke's treatment of aesthetics is more profound and comprehensive. Gerard, Alison, Kames and Price followed the combined methods of

Burke and Sir Joshua. Towards the latter half of the century the idea of the picturesque had developed to a considerable extent and the art-criticism is full of references to the varied tastes - Gothic, Chinese, classical, tastes for painting, architecture and landscape-gardening. The periodicals display the same general tendency to give embodiment to the shifting ideas of taste. The most important are Addison's essays on the Pleasures of the Imagination in the Spectator, representing an earlier phase of aesthetics. Philosophical treatment of the subject after the manner of Addison is not very common in the periodicals. Discussions on taste mainly relate to tastes for gardening and architecture. The Connoisseur tried to stem the tide of Gothic and Chinese tastes. The other magazines reflected the current tastes of the time.

In the second chapter we have dwelt upon the healthy current of classicism which began to flow in England from the archaeological discoveries in Greece and Italy. The Dilettanti Society played a large part in the revival of Graeco-Roman taste by sending out 'picturesque' tourists and antiquaries to the classic ground of Italy. Marbles, statues and antiques began to flow into the country, impressing the people with the classic sense of beauty, proportion and symmetry. The taste for Greek and Roman antiquities was further stimulated by the romantic descriptions of Stuart and Chandler, giving vivid accounts of their travels in Greece and Asia Minor.

We have laid special emphasis on the Grand Tour as having a great educative value in the formation of taste in the eighteenth century. The Grand Tour not only gave an impetus to the classical taste by the acquisition of antiques, but it contributed to the development of the ideas of the picturesque. 'Picturesque' tourists like Gray and Walpole were inspired by the grandeur and sublimity of the Alpine scenery. Mountains were no longer regarded as savage masses of stone ; they communicated a thrill of 'pleasing horror' or 'horrible joy'. Poets like Dyer and Thomson derived living inspiration from the Grand Tour and they have given us descriptions of the picturesque places on the continent. It is the Grand Tour which was the occasion for the prevalence of so many travel-poems in this century, beginning from Addison's Letter from Italy and reaching down to Goldsmith's Traveller and Wordsworth's Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches. We have traced through these poems the gradual evolution in the ideas of the picturesque in this century, culminating in Wordsworth's poems.

We discussed Gothic and Chinese tastes as different phases of the picturesque. Horace Walpole, Gray, the brothers Warton, Chatterton and Mrs. Radcliffe were all writers in the picturesque manner. Gothicism and Orientalism, especially the Orientalism of China - were different manifestations of Romance. If Romanticism be 'Renaissance of Wonder', the romantic elements of awe, wonder, mystery and the romantic fascination for the far-away and the unknown are all found as the basis and foundation for

Gothic and Chinese tastes. Gothicism and the vogue for the Chinese left an impress upon architecture and garden. Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill and Beckford's Fonthill Abbey are instances of the Gothic Revival. The Chinese vogue was represented by the pagoda in Kew Gardens. Chinese taste particularly manifested itself in the interior of the house—decorations, furniture, wall-paper, earthen-ware and vases. Chinese vases vied with Greek vases for mastery in the field of art. Orientalism found literary expression in Beckford's Vathek, Lady Mary's Letters and in the miscellaneous writings of Sir William Jones. The luscious descriptions of Arabia, Persia and India found in Sir William Jones's poems are saturated with the spirit of the East. The Oriental tradition which began in this century was carried on by Lord Byron who, among the romantics, was the most Oriental in his sympathies. No doubt had his own share of vivid experiences in the East, but it is not improbable that he drew upon the forceful accounts of Stuart and Chandler or upon Jones's exquisite renderings of Eastern manners. Byron openly acknowledged his indebtedness to Beckford. People of the eighteenth century not only turned to the East for romance, but they fixed their searching gaze on the picturesque places in every part of the world. Grainger's Sugar-Cane familiarised the English reader with some glowing moon-lit scenes in the West Indies. Mickle's Almada Hill revealed the beauty of Portuguese scenery. The picturesque beauty of every part of the world appealed to the men of this age and they succeeded in grasping this beauty with all the fervour of their enthusiasm.

We have devoted a large space to the influence of the taste for landscape-gardening which was closely associated with landscape-painting in this age. The garden had a remarkable influence on poetry. Poets, painters, gardeners and country-gentlemen were all caught in the whirlpool of the taste for gardening. The destruction of old formal gardens with their square and geometrical parterres and flower-beds ~~were~~ was fraught with important consequences. The classical spirit with its restraints and discipline was dying away, giving place to a healthy naturalism. Pope is essentially romantic when he inveighs against the fetters of formal gardening. His own garden at Twickenham with its celebrated grotto is typical of the age. Miss Edith Sitwell truly hits the mark when she says that Pope in his residence at Twickenham is a romantic figure ;— this remark may, with equal justice, be applied to Horace Walpole in his Strawberry Hill, Addison in his Bilton, Shenstone in his Leasowes, Lord Lyttleton in his Hagley Park and Sir Robert Walpole in his Houghton Hall at Norfolk. The country-gentlemen of the eighteenth century had favourite retreats, the more famous of which have been celebrated by the poets of this age, as we have seen from our discussion of the minor poets. The gentlemen-gardeners followed the example of Shenstone in lavishing all their fortunes on the beautification of their little estates. The wealthy oligarchy incurred huge expenditure in garden-architecture. The eighteenth century saw the rise of large number of garden-architects who supplied the needs of an enlightened aristocracy. This age also

witnessed munificent patronage of the arts by the nobility, the foremost among them being Lord Burlington. Kent, Repton, Brown and Chambers rendered magnificent service to the beautifying of the face of England. Despite their divergent theories, they were all working for the fulfilment of a common object, namely, adding picturesque beauty to the land. Notwithstanding the extravagance of some of their pet theories they gave a stimulus to the ideas of the picturesque and the picturesque.

The eighteenth century was a period of reconstruction in every branch of national activity. Clearness and method are first principles of reconstruction. The language must be unclouded and perspicacious^{clear}. Hence the men of this age had recourse to painting and the plastic arts for analogies. This accounts for the extraordinary popularity of Du Fresnoy's Essay on Painting and for the numerous poems on Beauty, Landscape and Gardens. The essential unity of the arts was grasped by~~by~~ their close interdependence. To effect a unification of the arts and to draw out analogies was one of the methods of reconstruction.⁽¹⁾ We have seen how metaphors and similes borrowed from painting and gardening became very common in prose and poetry of this age. Poets drew upon the sister-arts, just as the latter were inspired by the poetical idea. The creation of aesthetic pleasure was their common aim. Despite Lessing's theories, the appreciation of the ingredients of one art by another produced beneficial results. The poetry of this age is full of pictorial

(1) Dr. George Kitchin, The Language of Poetry or The History of English Poetic Diction (D.Litt. Thesis), Edinburgh : 1922.

description. Gradually the dependence of poetry on painting ceased. Towards the close of the century, from Cowper onwards, poets and painters threw aside the 'Claude-glass' and found beauty in hedge-rows and corn-fields. Their long training in looking at landscape pictorially exercised a wholesome influence on the romantic generation. Constable and Wordsworth represented the spirit of the English landscape in their respective spheres. In Byron's descriptions of the destructive forces of Nature, we feel an impress of the genius of Salvator Rosa, who has been called by Hazlitt 'the most romantic of landscape-painters.' In Keats's poetry we find a pictorial world of infinite suggestion. Morris, Rossetti and Swinburne were influenced by Keats's art. The Pre-Raphaelites took over from painting a new interest in colour. Their colours are pure, intense and bright and we find these colours reflected in their poetical vocabulary. In this way English poetry has maintained its great tradition and the ideas of the picturesque which came into being in the eighteenth century attained the vigour of maturity in the Art of England in the nineteenth century.

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